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July/August 2011

American Girl

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AMERICAN GIRL IS PUBLISHED BY
AMERICAN GIRL PUBLISHING, INC.
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562
E-mail address: readermail@americangirl.com
americangirlmagazine.com

Recommended by Parents' Choice, 2011

The National Magazine Awards Finalist

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Volume 19, Number 4

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Plus AG's Backyard Blast Poster

Cover photo: Steven Talley

Safety first!
Some of our projects and activities require an adult's help.
When you see this symbol, be sure to ask an adult to work with you.

Girls EXPRESS

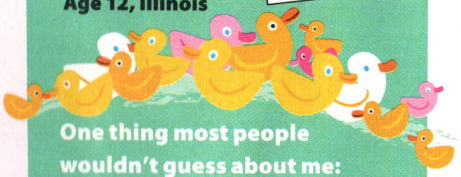
Shoulder Sparkle

Make cute, colorful jewelry for your summer clothes!

String a few **beads** onto a piece of **ribbon.** Loop the ribbon around the strap of a **tank top,** and adjust so that the ribbon hangs nicely across the front of the shirt—not too tight or too loose. Tie a double knot, and use **scissors** to trim the long ends of the ribbon. Untie the loop if you want the shirt to be plain again. Easy!

Meet an AG Reader

Kathryn H.
Age 12, Illinois



One thing most people wouldn't guess about me: I collect rubber ducks. I have more than 70 of them.

My proudest day: At my school, all of the fifth-graders have the chance to become "Great Americans." You have to memorize all kinds of patriotic things, such as the preamble to the U.S. Constitution, the proper way to fold a U.S. flag, the Gettysburg Address, and the names of the presidents. I did it all!

My favorite funny word: *Awkward.* It's fun to say!

A time I wanted to disappear: I was in summer band, and during a song we were performing, we were supposed to yell "Huh!" I yelled too early, and everyone stared at me.

My favorite part of *American Girl* magazine: I like the stories because I love to read. I also like the contests, quizzes, and Puzzle Palooza.

Introduce Yourself!

To find out how to be a featured reader, go to americangirlmagazine.com and click on "Start the fun."

Photo: Radlund Photography Illustrations: Tracey Wood

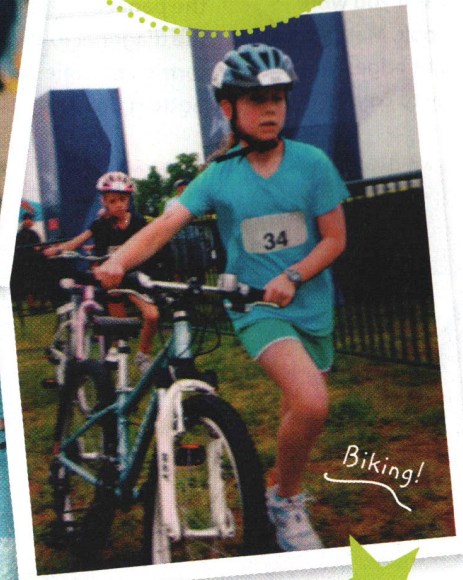
Shining Star

Gracie M. says that her grandfather, Papa Joel, would do pretty much anything for her. When he got sick with a kind of cancer called *multiple myeloma*, the 10-year-old took a turn doing something for him. The young athlete dedicated her training season to raising money for cancer research. Her sport? The triathlon.

Triathletes must swim, bike, and run a tough long-distance course. "Finishing a race makes me feel tired but excited," says Gracie. To raise money, the North Carolina girl started a website and found supporters and sponsors with help from friends and family. So far, she has raised almost $9,000 and has donated it all to a group that pays for cancer research.

No triathlon is easy. "But when I feel like I can't go any farther, I think about Papa Joel," Gracie says. "He's someone special, and I want him around for a long time. When I think of him counting on me, I know I can finish."

You can shine, too. Lots of charities hold fund-raising walks. Ask a parent to help you find one that will be meaningful to you. Then lace up your shoes to help out!



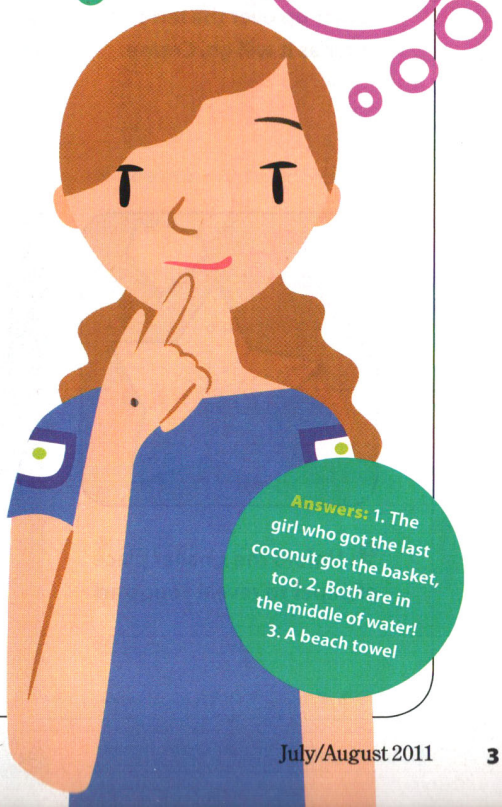
Summer Stumpers

Challenge your friends to solve these tricky riddles.

1. There are six coconuts in a basket, and six girls are waiting to get coconuts. But after each girl is given a coconut, one coconut is still left in the basket. How can that be?

2. Why is an island like the letter T?

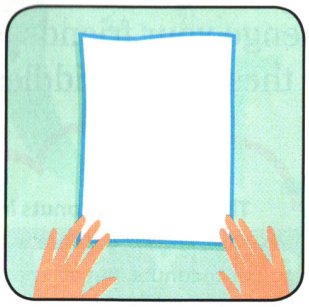
3. What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries?



Answers: 1. The girl who got the last coconut got the basket, too. 2. Both are in the middle of water! 3. A beach towel

Super Stars

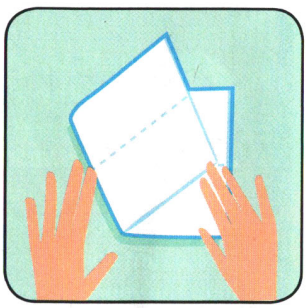
Make a simple star shape with a single snip!



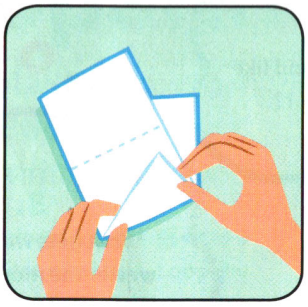
1. Lay an 8½-by-11-inch piece of paper flat with the short edges at the top and bottom.

2. Fold the bottom edge up to meet the top edge. Crease.

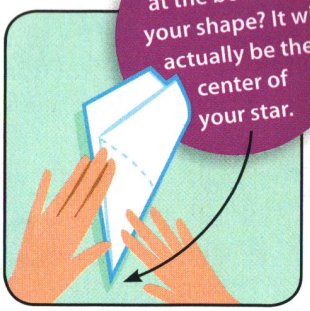
3. Fold that crease up to meet the top edge. Press firmly to crease, and then undo that fold.



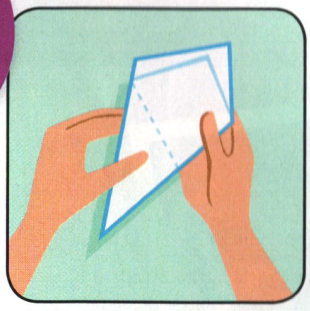
4. Bring the bottom left corner over to the fold line on the right edge of the paper. Crease.



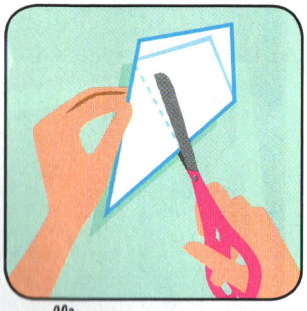
5. Fold the bottom right corner up over the left fold, as far as it will go. Crease.



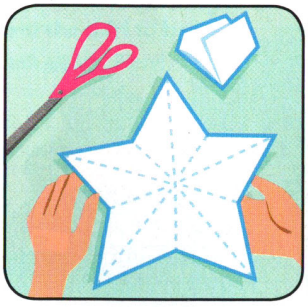
6. Bring the new crease up and over to the left edge of the paper, as if you were closing a book. Match up the left and right edges, and press firmly to crease.



7. Keeping the point pointing down, pick up the paper and look for the diagonal fold line that forms a triangle with the bottom point.



8. To make your star, use scissors to cut along the diagonal. If it's hard to cut through so many layers of paper, ask an adult to help.



9. Unfold the smaller piece of paper to reveal your star!

Bright Ideas

- Layer stars of different sizes and pin them to your bulletin board.
- Create a garland by taping stars to a ribbon.
- Make a sign with your name for your door.

Photo: Radlund Photography

Mini Quiz

Sea Creature Feature

Which underwater animal matches your personality? Circle the answers that fit you best.

1. Your dream vacation would involve
- **a.** flying on a rainforest zip line.
- **b.** lying on a beach.
- **c.** seeing a Broadway show.

2. You and your friends like to
- **a.** ride bikes.
- **b.** hang out and talk.
- **c.** play silly games.

3. Your favorite book is
- **a.** a novel filled with adventure.
- **b.** a book about historic events.
- **c.** a joke book.

4. You're best known for your
- **a.** courage.
- **b.** advice.
- **c.** laugh.

5. You'd most likely wear which T-shirt?

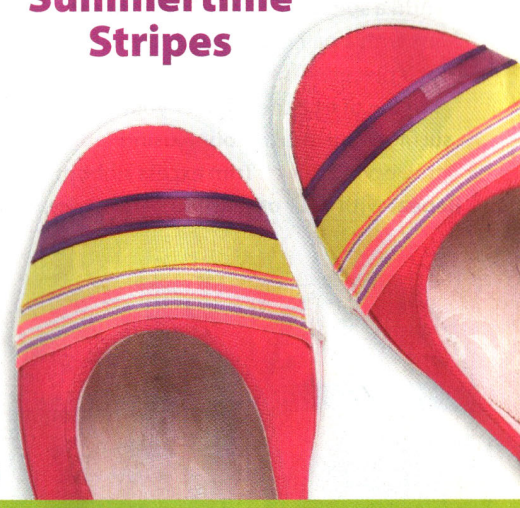
Answers

Mostly a's
You're a playful **dolphin!**

Mostly b's
You're a thoughtful **sea turtle!**

Mostly c's
You're a fun-loving **clownfish!**

Summertime Stripes



Cut out card. Flip over for directions.

AG Poll

Answer these questions, and then turn the page to see how your answers compare to those of other AG readers.

What do you miss most when school is out?

- seeing my teachers
- field trips
- eating lunch with friends
- school dances or parties

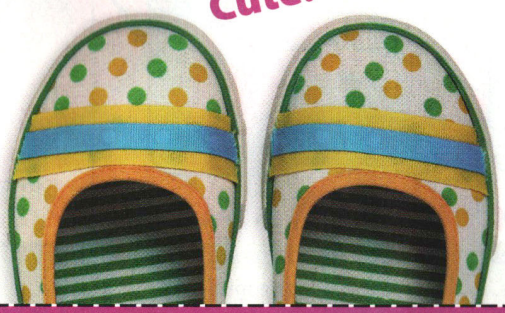
What's your favorite lip-balm flavor?

- mint
- cherry
- vanilla
- strawberry

Summertime Stripes

Add a splash of color to your shoes! Start with a pair of canvas **slip-on shoes.** Cut 3 pieces of **ribbon** so they fit across the toe of one shoe. Cover your work surface, and attach ribbon using **fabric glue** or **Glue Dots.** Trim excess ribbon. Repeat with your other shoe, and let dry.

Cute!



Photos: Radlund Photography

Reader Recipe

Small, Sweet Snack

Spread **creamy peanut butter** onto a **vanilla wafer cookie.** Add **sprinkles, raisins,** or **mini chocolate chips.** Yum!

Madhu K.
Age 10, Illinois

Send your yummy—and easy—recipes to the address on page 7.

Photo: Radlund Photography

AG Poll

What girls told us at americangirlmagazine.com

What girls will miss most when school is out:

- **46%** eating lunch with friends
- **22%** seeing teachers
- **20%** field trips
- **12%** school dances or parties

What's your favorite lip-balm flavor?

- **46%** strawberry
- **24%** vanilla
- **17%** mint
- **13%** cherry

To answer our weekly poll question, go to americangirlmagazine.com and click on "Fun for Girls."

True Story

Quiana's quick thinking helped police to catch a thief.

Dear American Girl,

When I grow up, I want to be a police officer and help people. I got this idea last year when I saw a man snatch a purse from an elderly lady walking down the sidewalk.

I saw what happened through the window from inside my house. I yelled for my mom. My dad heard me, too, and we dashed out the door and into our car. We hoped we'd see where the man ran. From the car, I spotted the thief in an alley. When the police arrived, they arrested the man I had seen. It made me a little sad to watch the thief get arrested, but it was for his own good. Stealing is wrong.

When we gave the purse (and the money that the thief had taken from it) back to the lady, she kissed my cheek and thanked me. It made me happy that I was able to help.

Sincerely,
Quiana C.
Age 10, Wisconsin

AG Art Gallery

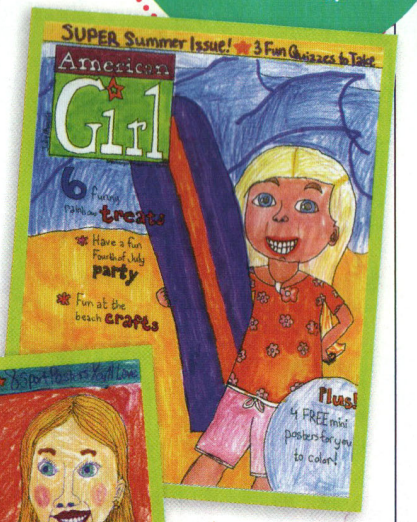
If you could design the cover of *American Girl*, what would it look like?

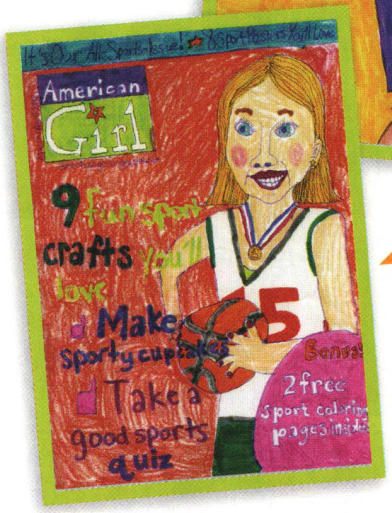
Help us fill our gallery! Send color copies of your **original artwork** or **photos** to the address below. Sorry, we can't return entries.

Abby B.
Age 11, Pennsylvania

Take a back to school quiz
American Girl
10 ways to make your locker look awesome!
Tips for making new friends
Make a trick-or-treat tote bag!

Grace L.
Age 10, Illinois


SUPER Summer Issue! 3 Fun Quizzes to Take
American Girl
Have a fun Fourth of July party
Fun at the beach crafts
Plus!
4 FREE mini posters for you to color!


American Girl
9 fun sport crafts you'll love
Make sporty cupcakes
Take a good sports quiz
2 free sport coloring pages inside

Emma M.
Age 12, Virginia

2 Free Baby Animal Posters & Fun Quizzes
American Girl
6 yummy Valentine's you can make
Readers' best party ideas
Have fun with your doll!
Plus!

Cortney C.
Age 11, Michigan

Write to Us

Be sure to include your

- first and last name
- address and phone number
- birth date, including year
- school photo or other portrait
- parent's signature

Send us a cool envelope! Print our address neatly on the front and your return address on the back.

We can't print every letter, but we read everything you send to us. Hope to hear from you soon!

Envelope art by
Lauren A.
Age 12, Missouri

Fantasy Floats

These girls made a parade of fun, festive, and fabulous floats!

Food on the Move

Kalani C.
Age 12, California

Purr-ty Party

Annie S.
Age 13, Florida

Humming Along

Lili G.
Age 11, Colorado

Penguin Paradise

Dena P.
Age 13, California

Picnic Crashers

Claire S.
Age 12, Michigan

Beach Buggy

Sarah N.
Age 10, Colorado

Illustrations: Lauren Scheuer

New Contest: Create a Cupcake!

Draw a dream cupcake—the yummiest, prettiest, coolest cupcake you can imagine! Maybe your cupcake has sparkly pink frosting, looks like a mini flower garden, or has a giant pile of strawberries on top. Send your cupcake drawing to the address on page 7, along with your first and last name, address, school or portrait-style photo, and birth date. Postmark deadline: August 10, 2011. Sorry—we can't return entries. ★

American makes me feel...

Happy Birthday, AG!

These girls are helping American Girl celebrate its 25th birthday.

Here are some words **girls** used to describe how they **feel** about AG.

Illustrations: Paige Pooler Photo: © iStockphoto/diane39

Girl inspired.

When I read stories about how other girls have made a difference in the world, I want to do the same.

Sarah M.
Age 13, New Hampshire

amazing.

You celebrate every girl, no matter who she is. You've inspired me to shine my inner star!

Courtney R.
Age 11, Utah

smart!

Julianna R.
Age 8, Ohio

brave!

Maya F.
Age 10, Maryland

connected!

Phoebe P.
Age 12, Missouri

closer as friends.

We do all of the crafts and quizzes together, and we have an awesome time sharing laughs and good times.

Kaitlyn W.
Age 11, Connecticut

Megan J.
Age 11, Connecticut

playful!

Grace G.
Age 8, California

Next question!

What would you do on your dream snow day?

I'd sit and write stories all day next to a fire.

It would be fun to have an indoor luau and pretend that it's summer!

I'd try to set a record by building the world's biggest snowperson.

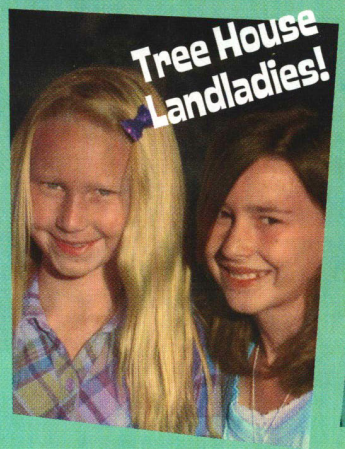
Send your answer to the address on page 7, along with your first and last name, address, school or portrait-style photo, and birth date.

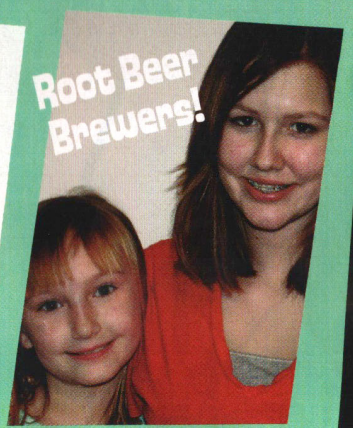
Postmark deadline:
August 10, 2011.

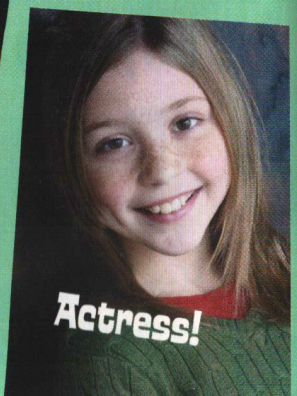
Some answers will appear in the January/February 2012 issue. ★

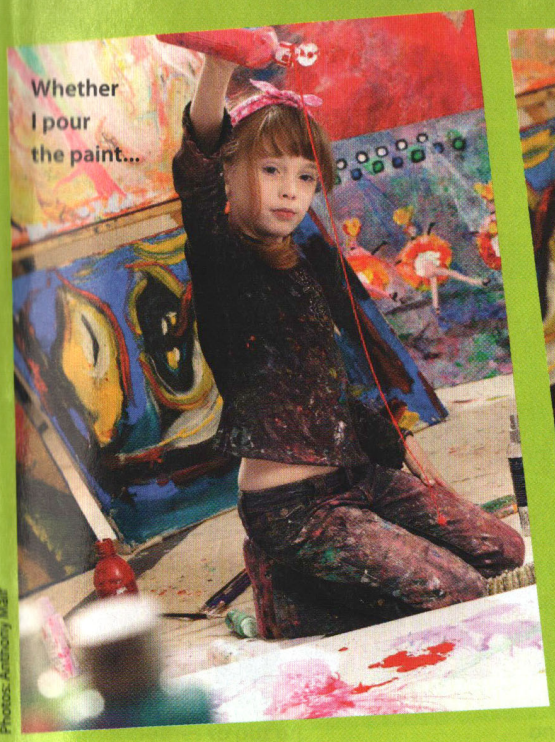
Get to Work!

These girls share what it's really like to have a job—**and get paid!**



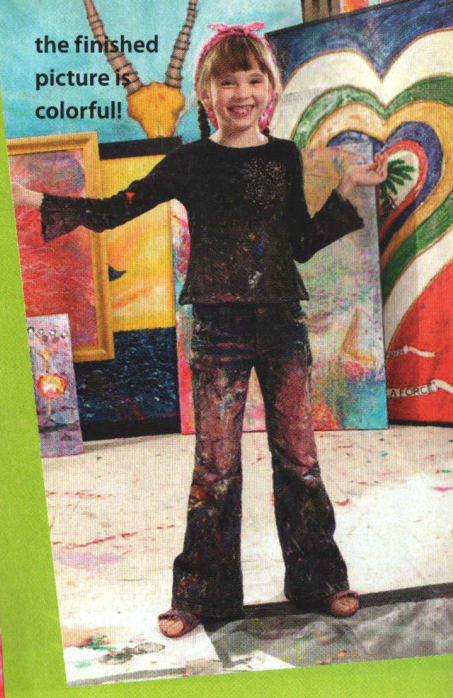






Whether I pour the paint...

...or splatter it,



the finished picture is colorful!

Photos: Anthony Mair

Name: Autumn D., age 9

Where I work: I paint in a special place: a small studio connected to my house in Nevada. There's paint all over everything, and the room gets a lot of light.

How I got started: My father gave me some paints when I was five. I loved how I could just look into my imagination and paint whatever I wanted.

Typical workday: I am home-schooled, and I paint for two or three hours every day. After some schoolwork, I play Frisbee with my dog, read, and then paint. After more schoolwork, we might paint again before dinner. When I say "we," I mean me and my imagination.

Money: When I sell a painting, the money goes into my college fund. I tell people it's for a good cause.

Why I love my job: I love that I'm free in my imagination to paint anything I want.

Why my job is hard: There's nothing hard about this job. Sometimes when a painting sells, I don't want to let it go, but I can always paint another one.

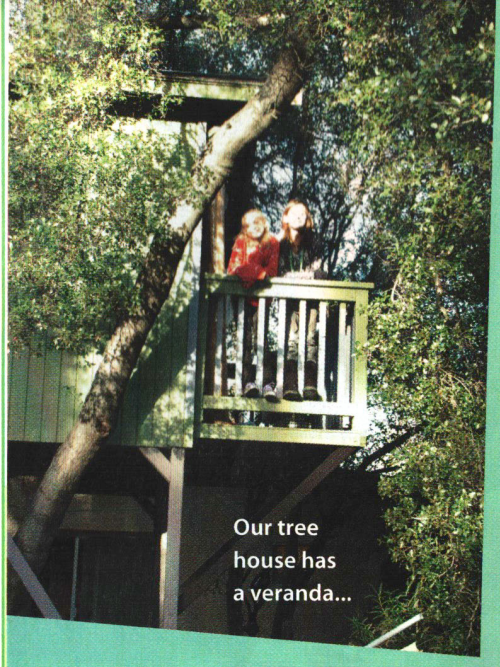
Lessons learned: Through painting, I've gotten to know my imagination. It has taught me what I can do with my mind and my hands. It has helped me with schoolwork, too. You might think imagination has nothing to do with math or history, but it helps me learn.

Future plans: This year I hope to discover something about myself that I didn't know last year.

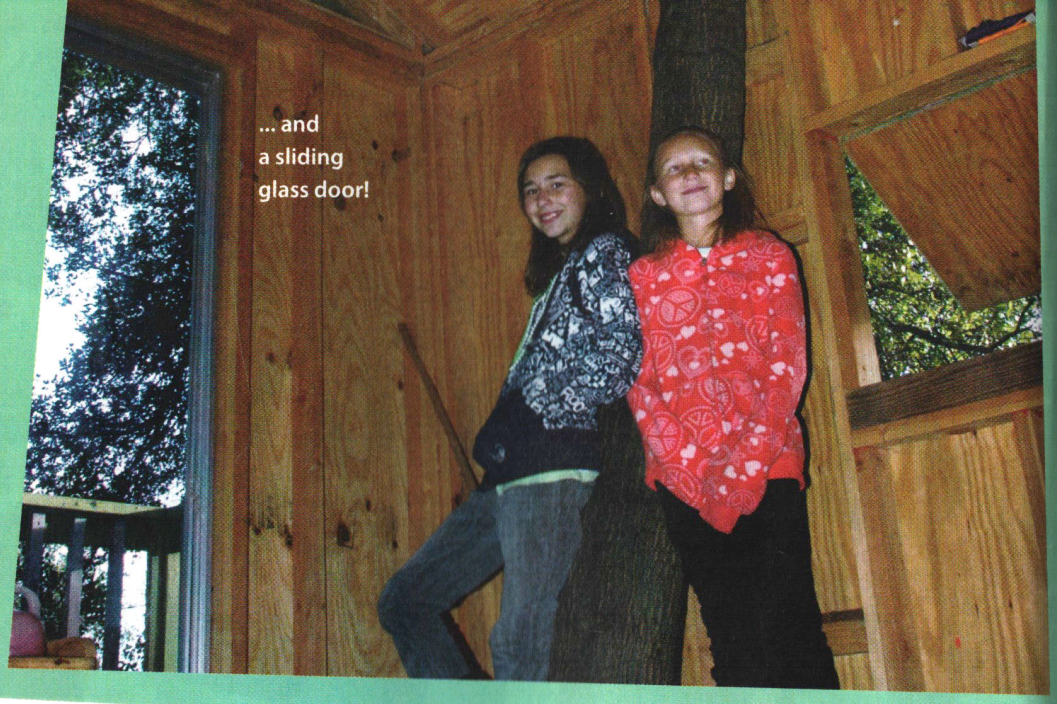
Advice: Everyone has talent. Look inside your mind to find yours. If you like to paint, paint what inspires you, whether it's a unicorn or a mud pie.

When I grow up: Of course I want to be an artist, but I'd also love to help others, maybe by selling paintings to help people in need.

Artist



Our tree house has a veranda...



... and a sliding glass door!

Landladies

Names: Emma L., age 13, and Megan L., age 10

Where we work: Our job is in our backyard in California. We let people rent out our tree house as a tiny place to live. The tree house is built around four oak trees close to our deck. It's nice inside—it has a veranda and skylights.

How we got started: Our dad wanted us to learn how to manage money, so he built the tree house and told us we could rent it out. We knew of a woman who worked a summer job on the river near our house. She needed a place to stay that didn't cost too much.

Typical workday: We have a pretty easy job. We clean the bathroom in our house that we share with our tenant. We also make sure the power is working so that she can turn on the fan and her computer.

Money: We charge $100 per month and save everything except about $10 (each) per month for spending.

Why we love our job: We love making money. Our tenant is really nice, too. We like to hang out with her.

Why our job is hard: Sharing the tree house can be hard. Sometimes we wish we had the tree house to ourselves during the summer to play games and have sleepovers. And cleaning the bathroom is not that much fun.

Lessons learned: We have learned responsibility such as remembering to make sure the power is on in the tree house and making sure that it's ready for a new person to move in.

Future plans: We'll keep on renting out the tree house. Next year we're going to use some of the income to buy a better fan to keep the tree house cool.

Advice: If you have a job, make sure that you do it well!

When we grow up: Megan would like to be a doctor. Emma wants to be a teacher or a photographer.

Model

Name: Hailee M., age 13

Where I work: My jobs usually take place at photo studios. There's usually a hair and makeup station and lots of people telling me what clothes to put on.

How I got started: I didn't want to wait until I grew up to follow my dream of being a model. I convinced my parents to take me to an open audition. I knew I might get rejected, but I still wanted to try. A few days later, the agency called. Soon I had my first job!

Typical workday: When I have a job, I take the day off from school. We drive to a studio about two hours away from our home in Wisconsin. The photo shoot usually takes about two hours.

Money: I save most of the money I earn. But I have spent some on clothes.

Why I love my job: I'm a real girly girl. I love trying on crazy outfits, getting my hair done, and having my picture taken. Sometimes the stylists braid my hair, curl it, or pull it into a high ponytail.

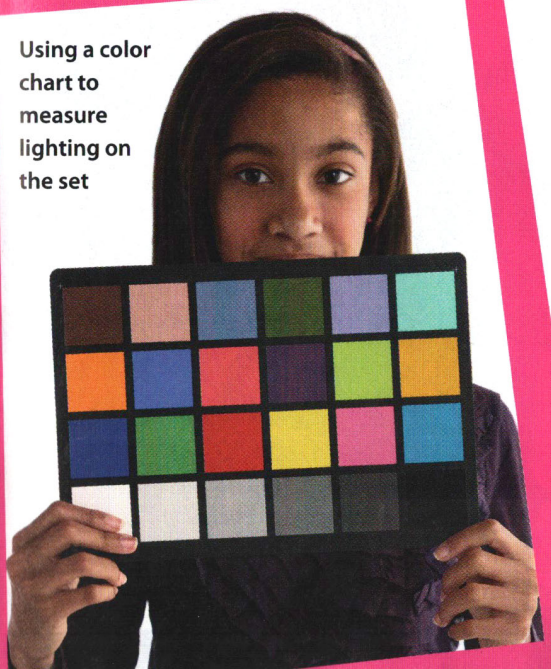
Why my job is hard: Posing for the camera can be hard—especially trying to figure out exactly what the photographer wants me to do.

Lessons learned: I've been shy most of my life. Modeling has taught me how to talk to people I don't know, which has helped me make new friends at school.

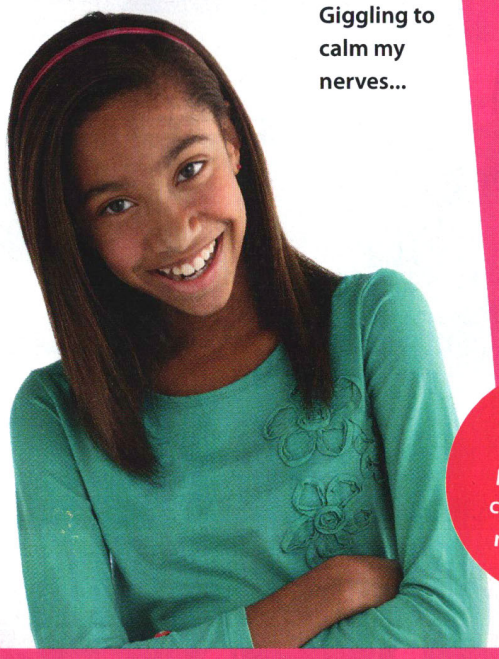
Future plans: I want to model as long as I can.

Advice: Chase your dreams. It was scary when I went to the agency for the open audition, but it was also a lot of fun.

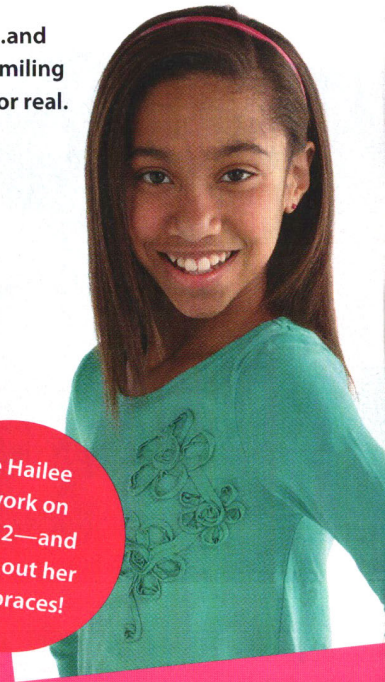
When I grow up: I want to be a model or a fashion designer. I like to wear pretty clothes, but I like to design them, too!



Using a color chart to measure lighting on the set



Giggling to calm my nerves...



...and smiling for real.

See Hailee at work on page 2—and check out her new braces!

Photos: Steven Talley

Root Beer Brewers

Name: Haley J., age 13, and Annabelle J., age 8

Where we work: We make root beer in the kitchen of our dad's restaurant in Wisconsin.

How we got started: When Haley was in kindergarten, our dad brought root beer floats as a treat for the class. Everybody loved them. We thought making root beer might be a good business, so we made up our own formula, and named the product after ourselves.

Typical workday: Once a month we mix up a batch. Then we deliver it to a company that adds bubbles and bottles it.

Money: We sell the root beer at our dad's restaurants, at our mom's office, and at our grandpa's barbershop. We've sold about 1,200 cases in all. We save the profits in a college fund. But also, for each case sold, we donate 25 cents to a children's hospital.

Why we love our job: We love making root beer together. We go to different schools and don't get to spend that much time together. Making root beer also brings us closer to our dad. It was really fun when our local news station filmed us at work.

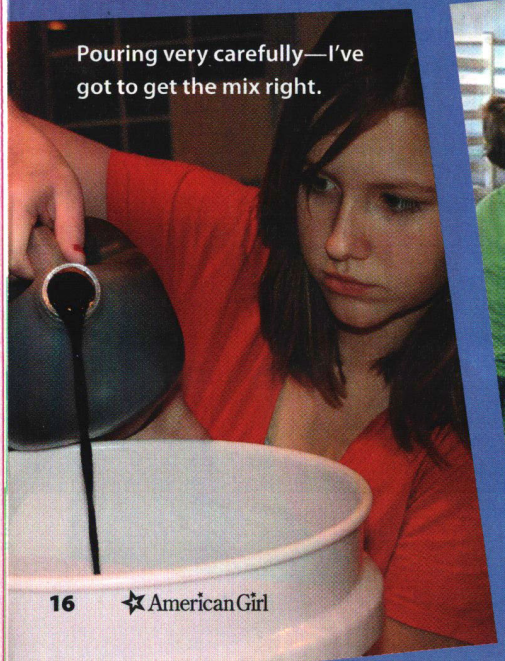
Why our job is hard: Saving the money is tough. Sometimes we wish we could spend it on clothes and other things.

Lessons learned: We've learned how to run a business, how to be patient, and to understand the value of money and hard work.

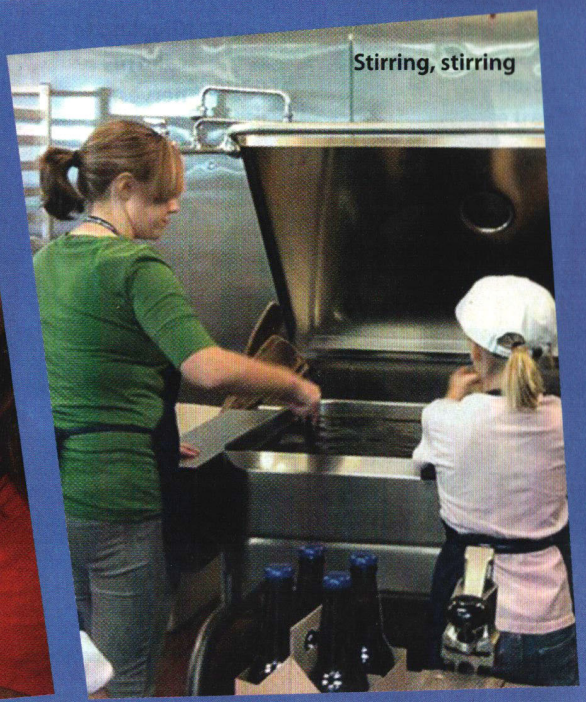
Future plans: We hope to sell our root beer in stores and more restaurants.

Advice: Learning how to start a business can help you later in life.

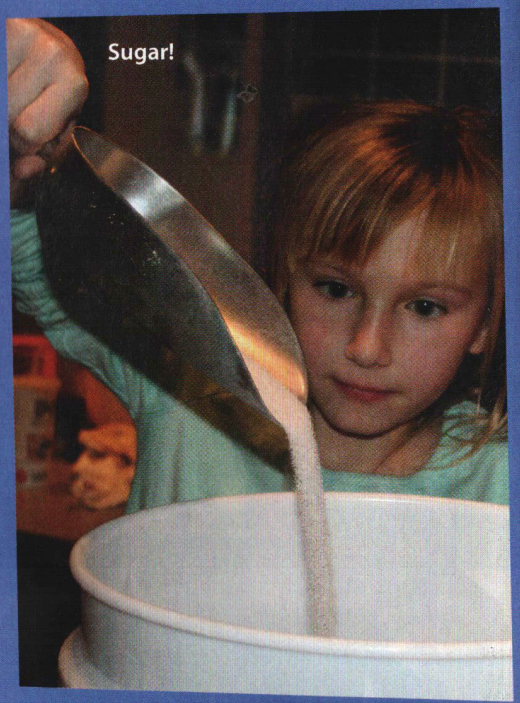
When we grow up: We want to keep the root beer company going strong!



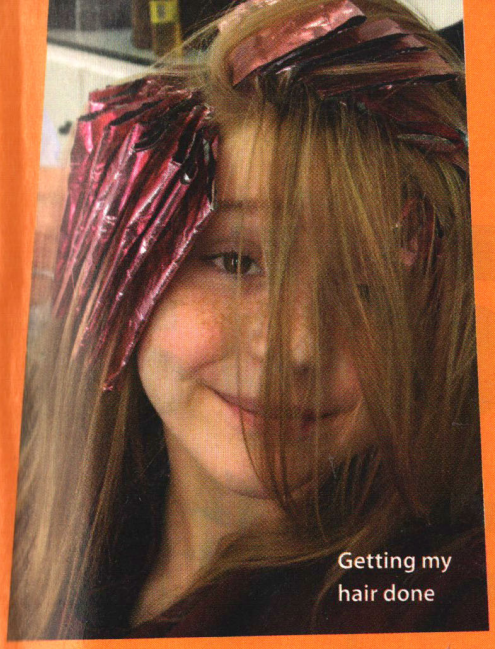
Pouring very carefully—I've got to get the mix right.



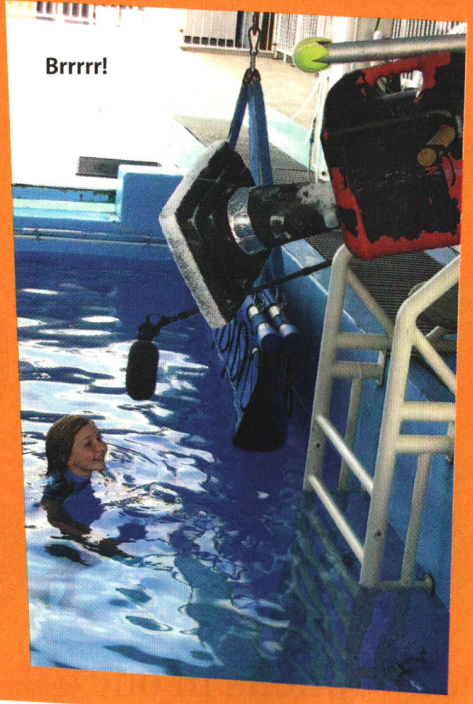
Stirring, stirring



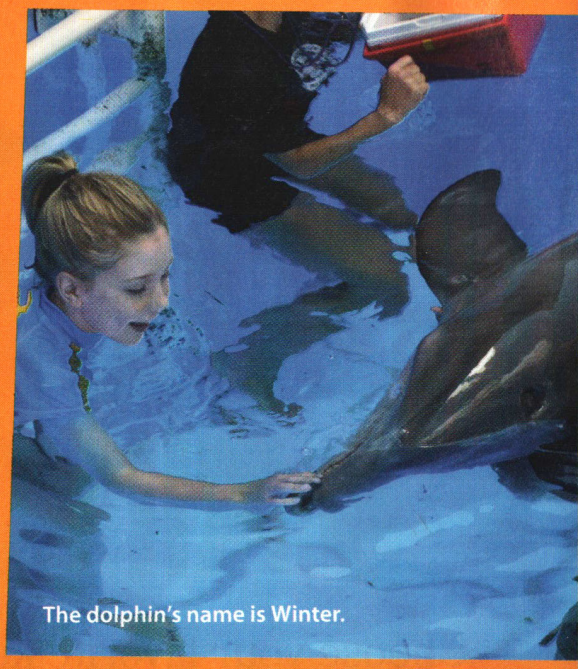
Sugar!



Getting my hair done



Brrrrr!



The dolphin's name is Winter.

Name: Cozi Z., age 12

Where I work: If I'm working on a commercial, usually it's made at a studio in Los Angeles. More recently I worked on a big movie set in Florida.

How I got started: When I was eight, I started performing in musical theater. One of my teachers encouraged me to act. I took acting classes and began auditioning for commercials.

Typical workday: I am home-schooled. If I'm working on set, I study with a studio teacher when I'm not shooting. Sometimes I get pulled out of "class" to go do a scene.

Money: Most of the money I earn goes into my college fund. I'm allowed some to spend on American Girl dolls, so that gives me extra motivation to work.

Why I love my job: I like meeting people who love acting as much as I do. And I love being part of stories that add happiness to the world.

Why my job is hard: It was not always easy to be smiley and social all day while we were filming the movie, but I did my very, very best. Living in a hotel for three months during the filming was hard, too, especially being away from my dog, my sister, and my dad.

Lessons learned: I have learned about perseverance—meaning, how to keep going even if things aren't going my way. It's hard when I try for a part and don't get it. And during filming of the movie (it's about a boy and a dolphin), I had to be in the water almost every day. It was cold!

Future plans: I hope to get more acting work this year.

Advice: If you want to act, it will be tough to juggle school and work, but it also could be the most fun thing you've ever done.

When I grow up: I want to continue to act, and I'd like to become a singer or dancer, too. ★

Actress

Quiz

This or That?

All About Jobs

Choose your favorite kooky options in our **40-question** blowout!

Say you got a job working as a PERFORMER.

Would you rather...

- star in a movie with a dolphin OR with a monkey?
- join a singing group that wears fabulous costumes OR be a solo singer who wears a rabbit costume?
- do a tap dance to classical music OR a ballet dance to hard rock music?
- be a TV actor who is known for her annoying laugh OR for being the one who always falls in goo?
- be a radio host who gets to talk a lot and play weird music OR who gets to play great music and talk only a little?
- be a model for a really tall hairstyle OR really tall shoes?
- be a wobbly tightrope walker OR a shy ringmaster?
- sing in a toilet-paper commercial OR dance in a cat-food commercial?

Say you got a job working for a RESTAURANT.

Would you rather...

- sell only foods that have been dipped in cheese OR foods served only on sticks?
- carry a tray of food while wearing roller skates OR clear off a table while wearing a blindfold?
- serve birthday cake that tastes like spaghetti OR spaghetti that tastes like birthday cake?
- deliver take-out food by speedboat OR by hot-air balloon?
- get to make up funny names for all the dishes OR have the restaurant named after you?
- put rainbow sprinkles OR mustard on every food you served?
- have to mime the menu OR sing the menu to customers?
- run a sundae stand OR a cupcake truck?

Illustrations: Ty Wilkins

Say you got a job working in an

OFFICE.

Would you rather...

fly to work in a helicopter **OR** be dropped off by a limo?

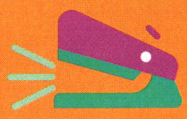
invent a cool new toy **OR** make a TV commercial that everyone recognizes?

have your office in a lighthouse **OR** in an old clock tower?

replace your office chair with a bean bag **OR** a rope swing?

be paid in bracelets **OR** in bubble gum?

bring the same brown-bag lunch every day **OR** try a strange new restaurant every day?



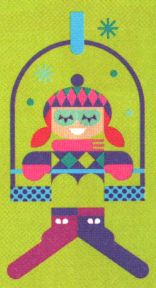
use singing scissors **OR** a barking stapler?

have a boss who had a cartoon voice **OR** who spoke only in rhymes?

Say you got a job working as an

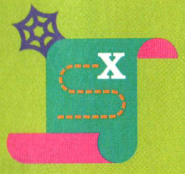
EXPLORER.

Would you rather...



escape on a high-speed ski lift **OR** on the back of a charging giraffe?

cross a rope bridge over glowing lava **OR** over an alligator-filled swamp?



find gold coins in a skull **OR** a treasure map in a spider's nest?

write your own book about your adventures **OR** have an actress play you in a movie?

give an expert lecture in a planetarium **OR** a dinosaur museum?

dig for treasure at the top of a mountain **OR** behind a waterfall?

hide out in an old bookstore **OR** in a dusty antique shop?

discover the world's biggest diamond **OR** a never-before-seen butterfly?

Say you got a job working with

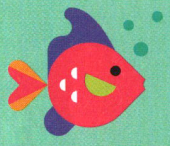
ANIMALS.

Would you rather...

brush a lion's mane **OR** a walrus's teeth?

teach a snake to stand up straight **OR** a cat to swim?

count a zebra's stripes **OR** a tiger's stripes?



go observe animals deep in the jungle **OR** at a coral reef?

clean up after an elephant **OR** make a vulture's dinner?

live for a week in a prairie-dog town **OR** in a beaver dam?

bottle-feed a baby panda **OR** a baby koala?

treat a raccoon with a cold **OR** bandage a rat's tail?

Now, would you rather...

send us your funniest this-or-that questions **OR** keep them a secret?

Send your best ideas for questions (on any topic) to the address on page 7. ★

Tropical Twisters

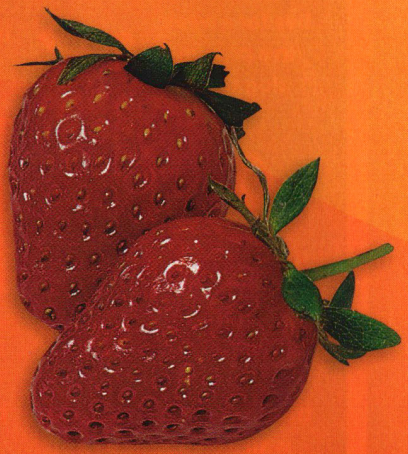
Beat the heat with these icy pineapple pleasers!

Coolada

Stay cool when it's hot! In a blender, combine 1 cup canned diced pineapple (drained), 1 cup coconut sorbet, and ¼ cup ice cubes. Ask an adult to blend well.

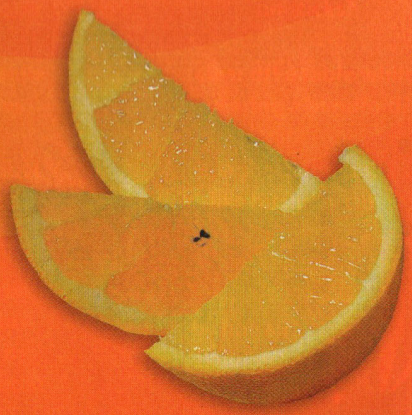
Aloha Sipper

Like a trip to the tropics! In a blender, combine 1 cup canned diced pineapple (drained), 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and 1 cup orange sherbet. Ask an adult to blend well.



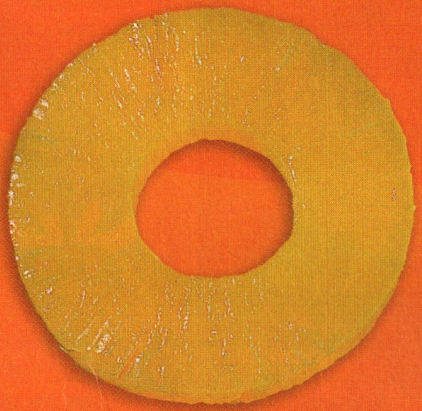
Pineapple Explosion

It's a pineapple delight! In a blender, combine 1 cup canned diced pineapple (drained) and 1 cup pineapple sherbet. Ask an adult to blend well.



Island Punch

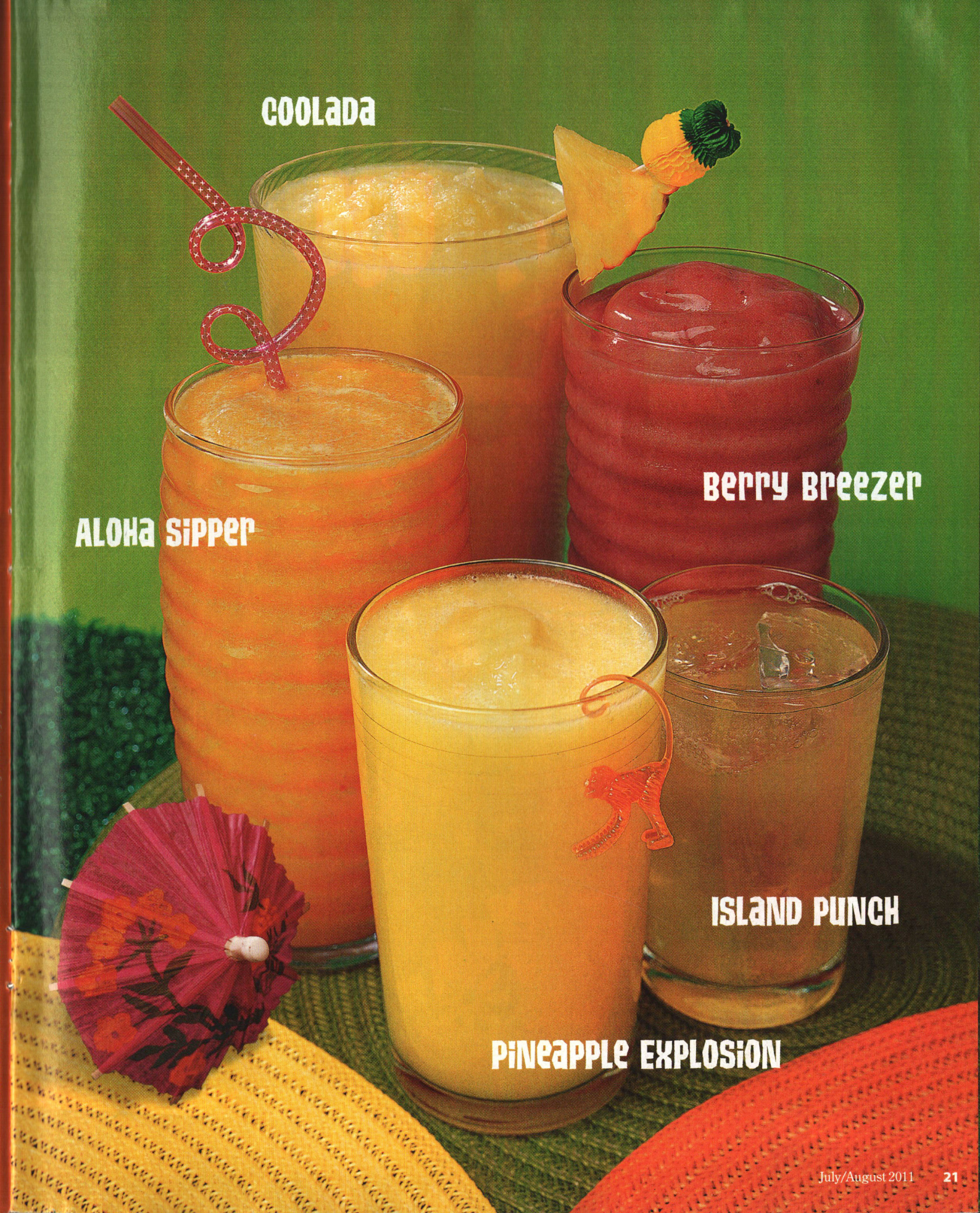
Here's a summertime sparkler! In a glass, mix together ½ cup pineapple juice and ½ cup lemon-lime soda. Add ice.



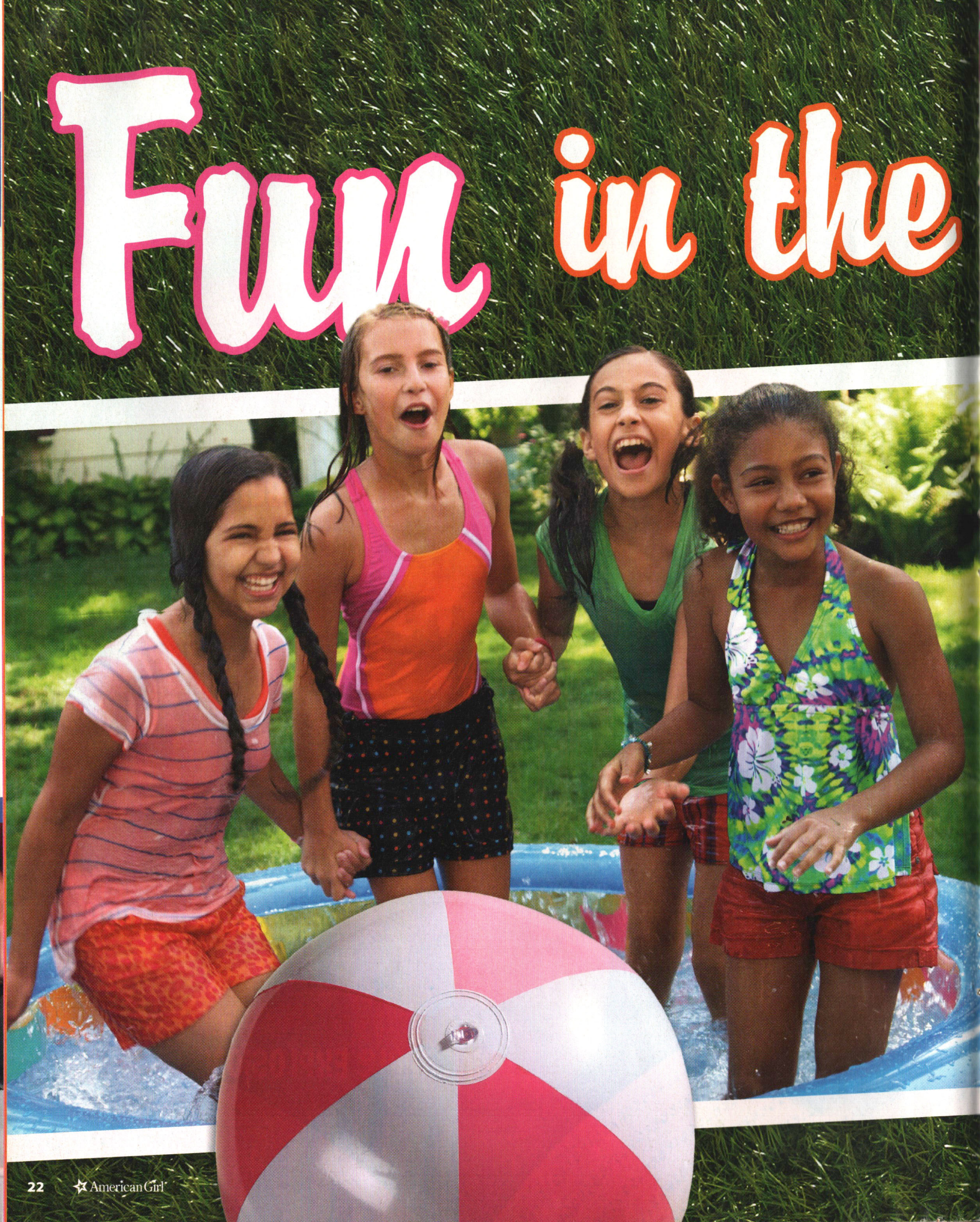
Berry Breezer

It's berry smooth! Scoop 1 cup strawberry sorbet and 1 cup pineapple sherbet into a blender. Ask an adult to blend until smooth. Stir in ¼ cup lemon-lime soda. ★

Photos: Mike McKenzie/Hot Shots; Coconut—Volosina, 2011 Shutterstock. Styling: Beth Buzogany


Coolada
Berry Breezer
Aloha Sipper
Island Punch
Pineapple Explosion

Fun in the



Sun

Head outside with your friends to soak up summer!

Tent Time

Ask an adult to help you string a rope or clothesline in the backyard about 4 feet high. Drape a sheet over it for a hideaway spot in the shade. Anchor the edges of the sheet with large stones or other heavy objects. Lay a blanket on the ground inside for a spot to read, hang out with your friends, or just cool off.

Sit-Upon

1. Cut one 34-by-21-inch rectangle out of a plastic tablecloth. Fold the rectangle in half width-wise, lining up the ends to make a square.
2. Cut 5-inch slits every ½ inch along the cut edges of the rectangle, cutting through both layers at once.
3. Tie the top piece of the tablecloth to the bottom piece by double-knotting the fringe together along two sides.
4. Before knotting the fringe on the third side, place folded newspapers inside so that you have a 1-inch-thick "cushion."
5. Finish knotting the fringe.

Safety first!

When swimming or doing pool activities, always make sure there is an adult present.

Summertime Sandals

Add summer style to your flip-flops. Cut a stretchy sports headband into three 5-inch pieces and tie them to the straps of your flip-flops.

PJ Picnic

After a sleepover, have breakfast in your PJ's—picnic-style! Spread a blanket outside and take a seat on cushions or sit-upons. Here's a picnic version of breakfast you can take outside: toast two frozen waffles and use combos such as strawberries and cream cheese, bananas and peanut butter, or even scrambled eggs and cheese as the filling.

Hot-Weather Headband

Stay cool with this style. Cut a T-shirt into three 2-by-36-inch strips (ask an adult first). Braid the strips into a cord that's long enough to fit around your head. Tie the ends together and wear!

Arctic Blast

Toss a large bucket of ice cubes into a wading pool. Give each player a plastic spoon and a cup. Set a timer for 1 minute. On "Go!" players try to scoop as many ice cubes as they can into their cup. The trick is that a player can use only the spoon and has to keep one hand behind her back! When time's up, whoever has collected the most ice cubes wins.

Stylish Shades

Turn sunglasses into fun glasses! Ask your friends to bring a pair of plain sunglasses when they come over. Then provide stickers, paint pens, and stick-on rhinestones so that your guests can decorate their shades.

Wacky Quacky

Place two rubber ducks at one side of a wading pool, one for each player. On "Go!" the players start squirting their ducks with spray bottles. The first player to get her duck across the pool wins!

Splash Golf

Get wet playing "golf"! For the holes, set up buckets around your yard. Fill the buckets with water, and give each player a large wet sponge. Take turns trying to throw your sponge into each bucket. If a player misses, she stands next to her sponge until it's her turn again. Keep track of how many tries it takes for each person. When you're finished with the course, the player with the lowest score wins.

Glitter Bugs

Collect smooth rocks outside and wash them. Use shimmery acrylic paint to make the rocks look like bugs or other backyard creatures. Let dry. Add stick-on rhinestones for spots or stripes. Finish by gluing on plastic google eyes.

Flock Feeder

Ask an adult to help you tie a piece of twine around a bagel. Coat the bagel with peanut butter, and roll it in wild bird seed. Ask an adult to help you hang the bagel outside, and watch your feathered friends flock!

Parfait Pops

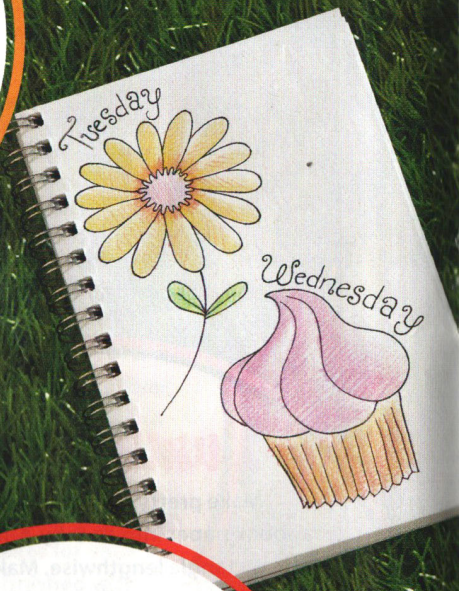
Fill a 3-ounce paper cup almost halfway with fruit-flavored yogurt. Place a layer of fruit on top of the yogurt. Sprinkle a thin layer of granola on top of the fruit. Finish filling the cup with yogurt. Insert a food-safe stick. Cover the top of the cup with foil, poking the end of the stick through the foil. Freeze overnight; peel away the cup and remove the foil before serving. Experiment with different flavors.

Luminarias

Make pretty paper lanterns! Cut scrapbook paper into an 8-by-6-inch rectangle. Fold the rectangle lengthwise. Make 15 cuts along the fold, a ½ inch apart. (Be careful not to cut all the way through—stop about a ¼ inch from the edge.) Unfold the paper. Form a tube by bringing the two short edges of the paper together. Overlap the ends by a ½ inch and tape together. Cut a piece of vellum into an 8-by-6-inch rectangle. Form a tube and slide it inside the luminaria. Attach with tape. Set a battery-operated push light inside the lantern, and watch it glow!

Iced T

For each set of partners, soak an old adult-sized T-shirt in water, wad it up, and place it in a plastic bag. Put it in the freezer for at least 4 hours. When you play the game, on "Go!" each team has to thaw the T-shirt enough for one of the players to put it on.



Doodle Diary

Start a journal—but use pictures instead of words. Pick one thing that happened each day and draw it. Did you jump from the highest diving board for the first time? Or maybe you just saw a cool flower in someone's yard. Whatever it is, doodle it down now so that you won't forget!

Daisy Chains

Wear flowers on your wrist! Start by stringing seed beads onto a piece of elastic cord. Between every 10 beads, add a flower: Thread a flower-shaped sequin onto the cord. Then add one bead. Next, thread the end of the cord back through the hole in the sequin. Continue adding beads and sequins until the bracelet can wrap around your wrist. Finish by tying the ends of the cord together in a double knot.

Campfire Cookies

Build mini campfire cookies! Cover your work surface with a sheet of wax paper. Ask an adult to help you melt 1 cup chocolate chips in the microwave. Use a spoon to drop small puddles of the melted chocolate onto the wax paper. Place a few orange and yellow chocolate candies in each circle. Break pretzel sticks in half, and place on top of the chocolate for "firewood." Let set.

Backyard Bag

Here's a summer tote for your sunny-day gear!

1. Start with a plastic shopping bag that has seams along its sides (the type you get at a clothing store). Cut the bag along the side seams.
2. Lay the bag flat on your work surface so that it is one long rectangle. Starting at one end of the bag, cover the entire rectangle with strips of colored duct tape.
3. When you're finished, ask an adult to help you trim any tape pieces that hang over the edge of the rectangle.
4. Fold the rectangle in half, and tape the sides so that it becomes a bag again.
5. For handles, cut two 24-inch pieces of duct tape. Fold each piece in half lengthwise. Shape each piece into a "U," and tape the ends inside the bag.

Pick a Mix

For backyard adventures and beyond, you'll need a snack to pack. Try a new trail mix:

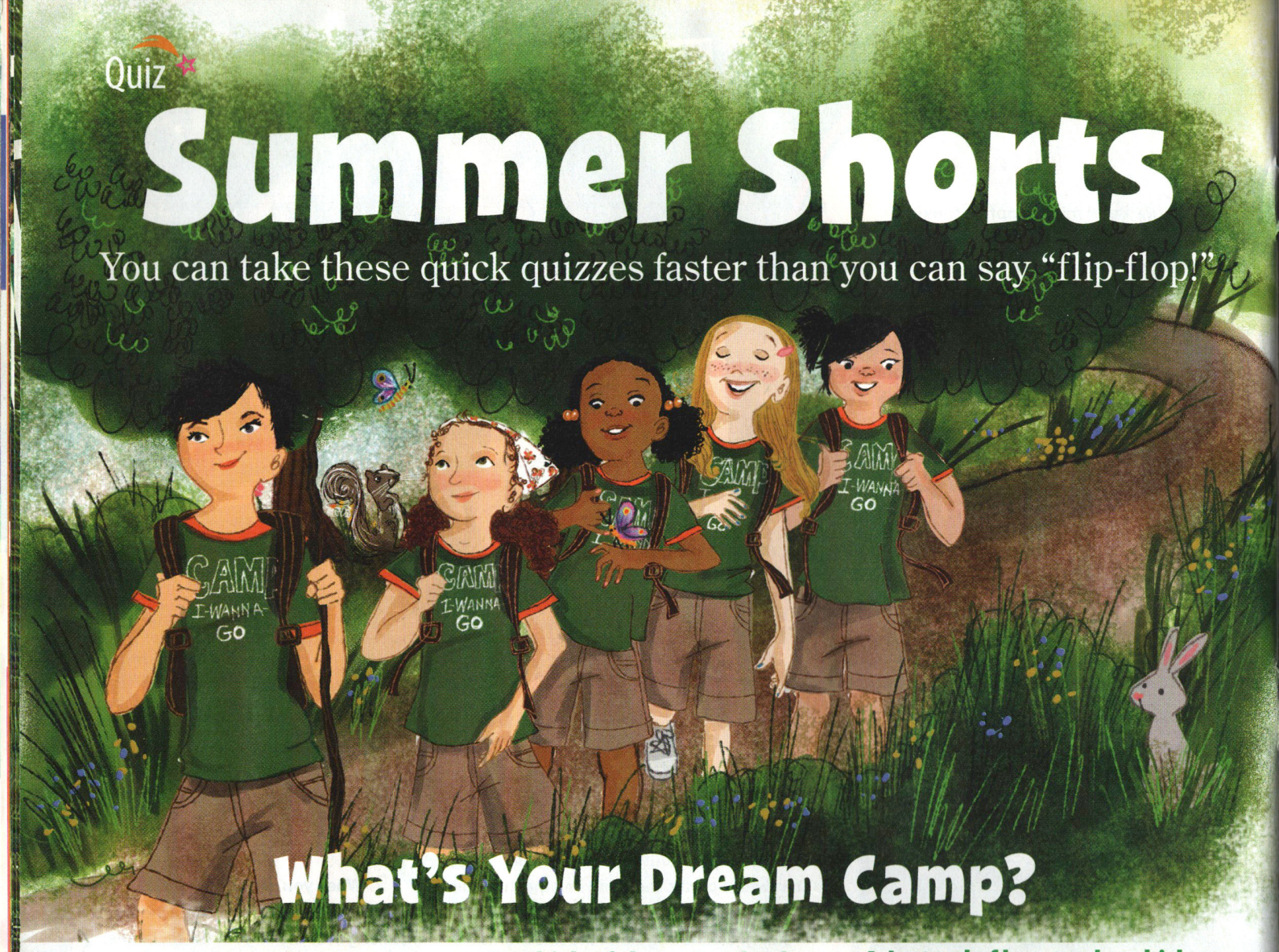
- S'more Mix: Graham cracker cereal, mini marshmallows, chocolate chips
- Cherry Beary Mix: Bear-shaped grahams, yogurt-covered dried cranberries, dried cherries, granola
- Easy Cheesy Mix: Cheese crackers, pretzel twists, rye chips, cracker sticks

Photos: Radlund Photography; Steven Talley Styling: Helen Berkun, Cindy Stutzel

Quiz

Summer Shorts

You can take these quick quizzes faster than you can say "flip-flop!"



What's Your Dream Camp?

1. Your fantasy tree house would...

a. have big windows—that way you could sit and watch the birds, squirrels, and other animals in the tree.
b. have autographed posters of sports stars you admire.
c. contain tons of art supplies—everything from paintbrushes to a potter's wheel.
d. serve as an extra closet for your clothes.

2. What would you use to wrap a gift?

a. a decorated brown paper bag
b. wrapping paper in your favorite team's colors
c. a gift bag you painted yourself
d. patterned paper and a sparkly bow

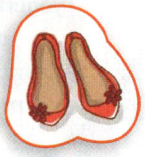
3. Which of these snacks do you like the best?

a. trail mix—it's great to nibble on during hikes.
b. celery sticks and peanut butter—this snack gives you lots of energy before a big game.
c. fruit salad—you love seeing all of those bright colors mixed together.
d. smoothie—the best part is adding the final touches, such as whipped cream or shredded coconut, to make the smoothie look perfect.

4. Instead of lemonade, which of these homemade items would you sell at a stand?

a. pressed-flower bookmarks
b. braided sport headbands
c. pet portraits
d. colorful bracelets

5. Which of these stickers would you put on a notebook?

a.
b.
c.
d. 

Where Would You Play at a Water Park?

1. Which of these activities would you like to do with your friends in your backyard?

a. a water-balloon battle
b. an obstacle course
c. a picnic
d. group games, such as Capture the Flag or Sardines

2. During a nature hike, you would...

a. look for animals—it would be cool to suddenly see a deer or fox cross the trail.
b. go climbing with your dad—you want to climb to the top of the tallest peak.
c. sit on a rock, close your eyes, and listen to the sounds of the forest.
d. have fun walking through the woods with friends or your family.

3. If you could have one of these animals as a pet, you'd choose a...

a. dolphin—they have lots of energy, and you never know what they're going to do next!
b. monkey—it would be a blast to swing from tree to tree with her.
c. panda—it would be nice to take naps cuddled up against her warm fur.
d. parrot—you'd love to have a new friend to talk to.

4. Which of these jobs would you like to have when you grow up?

a. an animal trainer
b. a movie stunt person
c. a writer
d. a party planner

5. Which of these photos is you on vacation?

a.

b.

c.

d.

Illustrations: Vanessa Newton

Which Fair Food Are You?

1. It's too hot to be outside, so you...

a. invite a group of friends to go see a movie. *Ahhh*, air-conditioning.
b. read a book while sitting next to a fan.
c. take a cool bubble bath.
d. make fruity frozen ice pops for everyone in your family.

2. You and your sister have been fighting. To make things better, you...

a. tell a joke to get her to smile.
b. give her some space, and then come to her later to apologize.
c. calmly talk about the problem with her.
d. make an "I'm Sorry" card for her.

3. Your favorite fruit is...

a. watermelon—you love anything that's pink.
b. blackberries—when you bite into one, you like that pop of flavor.
c. pineapple—it's a refreshing snack on a hot day.
d. strawberries—they taste best when they're sprinkled with a little sugar.

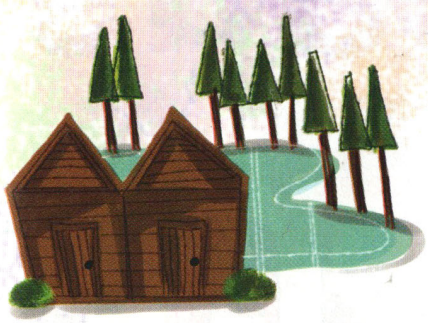
4. You would wear a bracelet that has...

a. pink beads.
b. clear beads with stars inside.
c. multicolored beads.
d. cupcake beads.

5. If you were going to a swimming pool, you would...

a. be excited to jump right in and gather all of the kids to play a game.
b. want to sit in a chair and watch everybody splashing around—then join in.
c. plan to wear your most colorful swimsuit, flip-flops, hat, and sunglasses.
d. invite a friend you haven't seen all summer to go along with you.

Answers



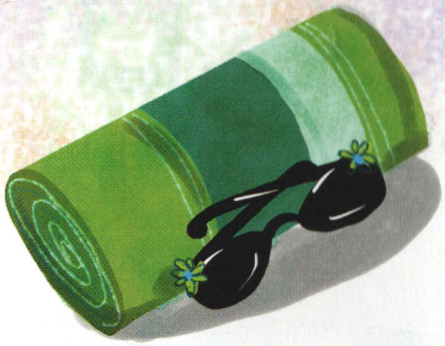
What's Your Dream Camp?

Mostly a's:
Camp Green Earth. You love the great outdoors, and you'd have fun at a camp where you can go on lots of hikes, help take care of animals, and learn how to be more eco-friendly.

Mostly b's:
Camp Whoo-Rah-Rah. At this camp, you would get the chance to play nearly every sport imaginable—all in one summer. And the best part? Your favorite athletes would be the counselors!

Mostly c's:
Camp Paintbrush Pines. At this camp, you'd paint beautiful nature scenes, make pottery, take amazing photos, and create your own comic book. And you'd get to display your masterpieces in an art show at the end of camp.

Mostly d's:
Camp Sew-a-Lot. Sketching, sewing, styling—this camp is a fashion paradise. You'd hang out with girls who love fashion as much as you do, and at the end of the summer, you'd get to display outfits you've designed in a fancy runway show.



Where Would You Play at a Water Park?

Mostly a's:
Wacky Wave Pool. Big waves, little waves, waves that get you soaked—your ready-for-anything personality can take on any surprise that comes your way.

Mostly b's:
Mount Everest Waterslide. The tallest, fastest water slide in the park? You're there! Since you're a thrill seeker, we'd see you speeding down this waterslide over and over again.

Mostly c's:
Go with the Flow River. You love to just kick back and relax, so gliding along a calm, quiet river in a tube is what you would do during your day at the water park.

Mostly d's:
Bubbly Bumper Boats. Doing silly, fun things with friends is your favorite thing to do. You'd round up your pals to go to the bumper boats and have some summer fun together!

Which Fair Food Are You?

Mostly a's:
Pretty & Pink Cotton Candy. You're a cheerful girl who makes everyone around you feel happy. Pink is one of your favorite colors, and you have a laugh that makes everyone giggle along with you.

Mostly b's:
Doggone Delicious Corn Dogs. You might seem a bit shy on the outside, but once people get to know you, they find out that you have a warm, comforting, genuine personality.

Mostly c's:
Frosty Bites Snow Cones. You are known for being cool and calm, but you aren't afraid to show your bold, colorful side, too.

Mostly d's:
Glaze Daze Mini Doughnuts. You love thinking of small, creative ways to sprinkle kindness wherever you go. Whether you do it by leaving a nice note for your friend or surprising your mom with a homemade dessert, you know that it's the little things that mean the most. ★

Craft

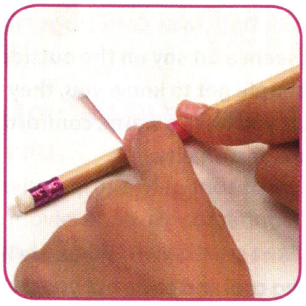
Roller Beads

Try this new *spin* on making a unique bracelet.

You will need:

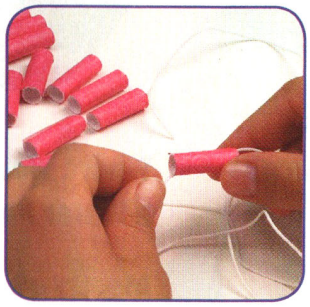
- scissors
- pencil
- ruler
- glue stick
- scrapbook paper
- elastic beading string
- craft glue

To roll a bead:

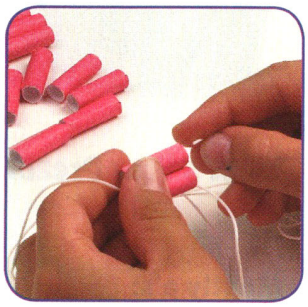


Cut out a 1-by-3-inch rectangle from scrapbook paper. Roll the rectangle tightly around a pencil. Glue the end of the paper closed, holding it for about 1 minute until dry. Slide the pencil out.

To make a bracelet:

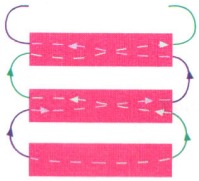


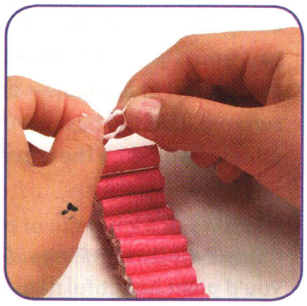
1. Make about 18 beads. Cut 5 feet of elastic beading string. Guide one bead on the string and center it.



2. Stack a second bead on the first. Thread right end of string into right side of bead, and pull through.

3. Insert left end of string into left side of the same bead, and pull through. Pull ends tight. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for each bead (see diagram below).



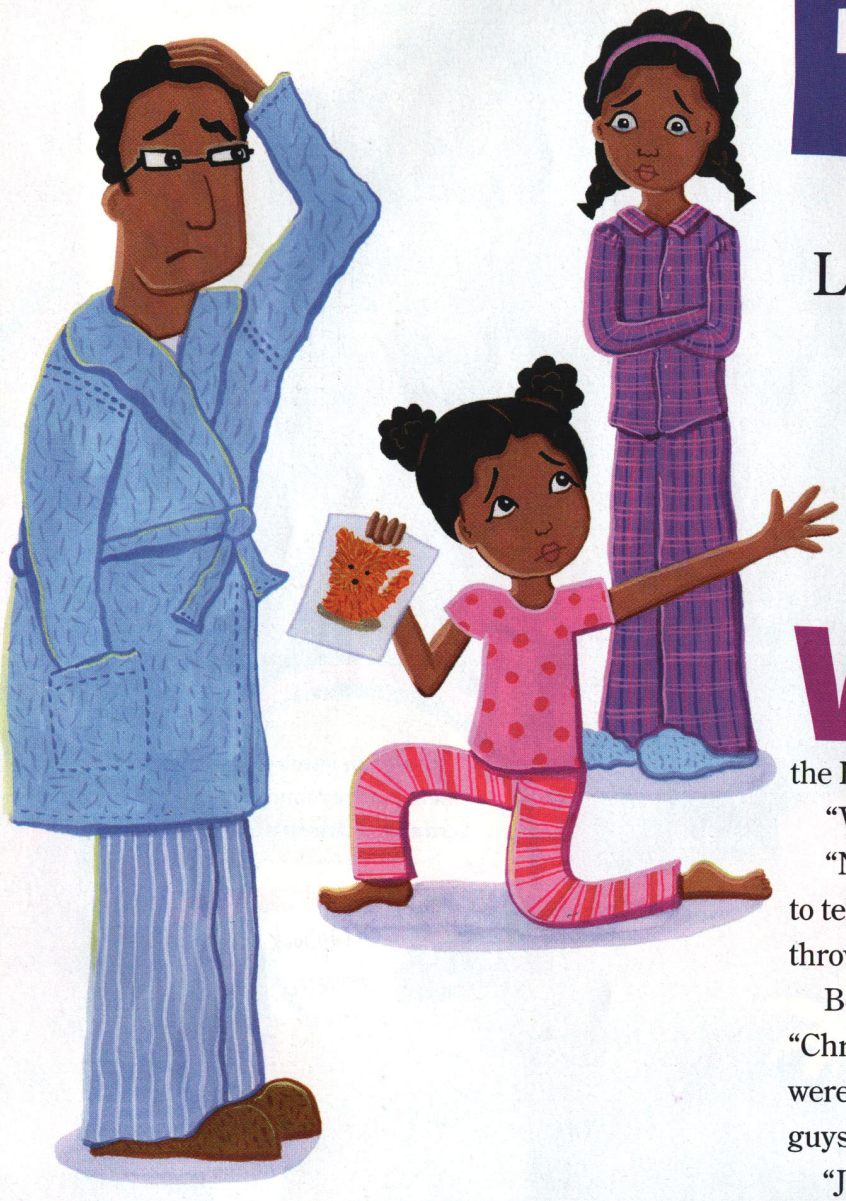


4. To finish, loop bracelet around and pull ends of string through first bead once. Tie tightly. Trim extra string. Dab knot with craft glue. Let dry.

Photos: Radlund Photography. Illustrations: Casey Lukatz

More fun jewelry ideas can be found in *Scrapbook Jewelry.*
American Girl
Scrapbook Jewelry
Cute and Clever Jewelry Made from Scrapbook Supplies!
Plus 6 bonus sheets of tear-out scrapbook paper!

The Un-Surprise Party



Lexie knows a big secret. Can she keep it?

by Kathleen O'Dell

When Lexie Briar's parents called her into the kitchen, she had not expected them to shut the door. Shut doors at the Briar house meant serious talk.

"What did I do now?" Lexie asked.

"No worries," said her father. "We just wanted to tell you that your mother and I have decided to throw your big sister a surprise party!"

Both Mr. and Mrs. Briar had on their "Christmas morning" faces, which told Lexie they were completely excited by the idea. "When did you guys come up with this?"

"Just a minute ago. And we're going to have to whisper," her mother said. "Just in case Rebecca comes by. Got it?"

Lexie nodded, leaned in, and listened to the details: the party would be on the Friday after next. They would tell Rebecca that there was going to be a last-minute Girl Scout meeting at the house—which would really turn out to be the party. Mrs. Briar would hand out envelopes that she'd say were notes for the parents but that actually were filled with confetti. On cue, everyone would throw the glittery stuff in the air and say, "Surprise!"

Although Lexie tried to look excited about these plans, she couldn't help comparing Rebecca's upcoming party with her own un-secret, confetti-free celebration just two months ago. "So, um, why are we making such a big deal?" she asked.

"Because this party is going to be special," said Mr. Briar. Then, glancing slyly at his wife, he whispered, "We are going to give her… a puppy!"

Lexie leaped and let out a shriek. "A PUPPY?"

"Shhh!" said her dad, putting a finger to his lips.

"But a *puppy,*" Lexie said in the loudest whisper ever. "That is, like, phenomenal!"

"It is very, *very* important," said Mrs. Briar, raising her voice only slightly, "that you not say a thing to Rebecca. We also ask that you don't talk about it with any of your friends. We need you to be super secret about this whole thing. Can you do that?"

"Yeah! Of course." She thought for a moment about all the begging she and Rebecca had done over the years. All the times they dragged their mother to a "pet adoption" event at the mall. All the "maybe somedays" their parents had said to put them off. Lexie had wanted a puppy just as badly as Rebecca did—maybe even more. She frowned. "Is it just Rebecca's puppy?"

"It will belong to the family," her father said.

"It will belong," said her mother, "to anyone who pitches in to take care of it. Someone at my office had a puppy looking for a home. We just thought it was time. Now that Rebecca will be twelve and you're already nine, you're both old enough to take responsibility for a pet."

Lexie felt better hearing this. It was going to be her dog, too. And maybe Rebecca was getting a special surprise party, but wasn't it even more fun to *know* they were getting a puppy? Having something to look forward to every day?

That night at dinner, Lexie had to bite her lip to keep from smiling—especially when Rebecca started asking questions about the so-called Girl Scout meeting.

"I know you're doing Mrs. Nicholson a favor while she's gone, but I don't know why we have to

Illustrations: Jennifer Kalis

have Girl Scouts at our house that Friday," Rebecca said. "Can't we meet on Monday like we usually do?" Rebecca asked.

"I'm afraid that I've already promised to be a substitute leader," said her mother. "And I can't take the girls on Monday because I have a late meeting that day."

"I mean, Friday's my birthday, you know," grumbled Rebecca. "In case anybody cares."

At this remark, Lexie tried to swallow milk to keep from laughing but ended up spurting a stream down her chin instead.

"Eww!" Rebecca said. "Lexie, use a napkin!"

As Lexie dabbed, she tried catching her father's eye and giving him a secret smile, but he wouldn't look back.

"Maybe we can celebrate your birthday on Saturday instead, Becca," he said. "Think of something special you'd like to do."

"I know what *I* want to do on Saturday," Lexie said, trying to sound mysterious. She was picturing herself chasing the new puppy around the yard.

"Sorry. This isn't about you, Lexie-poo," Rebecca said. "It's my turn. You've *had* your birthday."

Lexie narrowed her eyes. Rebecca was in one of her snobby moods where she acted like Lexie was a kindergartner. "May I be excused?" Lexie asked with great dignity. "I have many pages of multiplication to do."

Instead, Lexie went straight to the computer to look up advice on puppy care. She was determined to know everything necessary to become the puppy expert of the family. After all, her mother had just said the dog would belong to the people who took care of it. Well, Lexie would take care of it best!

At school the next day, Lexie felt the puppy secret bubbling up inside her brain to the point where she could think of little else. She drew barking puppies on all four corners of her vocab handout. She started a list of potential puppy names:

At lunch, she could hardly bear sitting next to her best friend, Sophie—the Sophie who knew that Lexie had wanted a dog more than anything else in the universe—without at least hinting about the exciting news.

"Hey, you keep kicking my chair," Sophie said.

"That's because I'm so excited," Lexie said.

"About what?"

Lexie shook her head sadly. "I can't tell."

"Oh," Sophie said.

"But maybe you can guess?" Lexie suggested.

Sophie, already an expert on everything about Lexie Briar, didn't take long to figure it all out. And Lexie didn't have to speak. She merely shook her head yes or no to a series of questions.

"A dog? Really?" Sophie said, giving her a happy punch in the arm. "That's so cool! Rebecca is going to flip out! What a great surprise!"

Feeling a little guilty, Lexie added. "I didn't say anything, though, did I? Not one word. I can't help it that you guessed."

"Absolutely," agreed Sophie.

"Anyway, I think I kind of have a right to tell you about it, because it won't be Rebecca's dog. It's for both of us, really. Mom has a friend at her office who's giving away a puppy. They're just using Rebecca's birthday as an excuse to give it to us."

For the rest of the week, Lexie and Sophie discussed the dog every day. When Mrs. Briar showed Lexie an e-mailed photo of the little puppy, with its shiny round black eyes peering from a ball of orange fluff, Lexie knew she was in love.

"I can't believe she's not a toy! Look at her tiny pink tongue! She's actually smiling!"

"A dog? Really?" Sophie said, giving her a happy punch in the arm. "That's so cool! Rebecca is going to flip out! What a great surprise!"

"That's the Pomeranian in her. I don't know what else she is," said her mother.

"I do. She's the cutest puppy in the world," Lexie said. "And she's going to be mine!"

Mrs. Briar tapped the keyboard. "I'm going to have to delete this, you know. For safety's sake."

"Just let me look at her a few more minutes. Please? I promise I'll delete it." And Lexie did—right after she printed out the picture and put it in her school folder to show Sophie.

When at last that Friday morning came, Lexie was so excited that she got up earlier than everyone else. She snuck the picture of the puppy with her so that she could look at it while she ate her cereal. What time was it now? She counted on her fingers to see how many hours she'd have to wait before she had her own adorable dog in her arms.

Lexie smiled brightly at her father as he shuffled into the kitchen in his bathrobe. "Hey," he said, "what's up with you, early bird?"

Lexie stood, lifted the puppy photo above her head, and sang her own version of the birthday song as she hopped from foot to foot:

"Happy puppy day to meee! Happy puppy day to meee! It may be Rebecca's surprise par-teeeee! But the puppy is for meeeeee!"

She finished the dance down on one knee, arms spread wide, waiting for her father's laugh, but his eyes seem fixed on something behind her. Lexie followed his gaze.

Uh-oh.

There was Rebecca in rumpled flannel pajamas, her mouth open in disbelief.

Lexie gulped. "You're not supposed to be up yet," she said weakly.

Rebecca looked from her sister to her father. "Is that true, Dad? Am I having a surprise party?"

Mr. Briar ran his hand down his face. "Oh, Becca…"

"I am, aren't I?"

Lexie scrunched her shoulders up around her ears. *Say no!* she prayed.

"Yes," he said.

Rebecca stomped over to Lexie and took the picture from her hand. "And this was supposed to be my surprise, too, wasn't it?"

Lexie watched her sister's eyes fill with tears and wished there was a way to go two minutes back in time. She wanted to beg for forgiveness, but the look on her sister's face told her she couldn't.

Rebecca dropped the picture and let it flutter to the floor. "Thanks a lot, Lexie," she said. "Way to go." Then Rebecca ran to her bedroom with her father trailing after her, leaving Lexie alone with her horrible mistake.

She smoothed the puppy's picture on the table and thought to herself, *I shouldn't have let myself get so excited. It's really not my fault.* Then she shook her head and thought again. *No, that's not it.* She had been jealous, too. Even selfish. "I don't even deserve to have a puppy," she said out loud.

And as Lexie predicted, there was nothing her parents could say that would make Rebecca less angry with her. She tried apologizing on the way to school, but Rebecca crossed the street and walked on the other side.

Even Sophie wasn't much help consoling Lexie, although she tried. "You've said you're sorry, and there's nothing else you can do. You know?"

"Do you think the puppy will make her feel better?" Lexie asked.

"Sort of," Sophie said. "I mean, she's definitely going to love the puppy. But she's still going to be mad at you."

Lexie felt bad all day. After school, she was careful to let Rebecca and all her Girl Scout friends get a head start going home. She planned to sneak in the house through the garage and spend the party in her bedroom without anyone seeing her. After all, Rebecca wouldn't want her there. But when she reached the backyard gate, she couldn't resist the hope of sneaking a glimpse of the new puppy. She undid the latch and peeked in, only to find her mother on her hands and knees in the shrubbery.

"What are you doing?" Lexie asked.

Mrs. Briar sat up, her hair wild and dotted with bits of leaves. "I think," she said, "our puppy has found a hole in the fence."

"No! I didn't know we had a hole."

"Neither did I. It's a little one behind the azaleas. I put her back here just minutes ago. I was going to bring her inside to show the girls, and now?" She let out a groan. "I have to tell Rebecca."

Rebecca dropped the picture and let it flutter to the floor. "Thanks a lot, Lexie," she said. "Way to go."

Lexie followed her mother into the house and watched the frozen expressions on the girls' faces when they heard the news.

"Are you sure, Mom?" Rebecca asked. "Did you look everywhere?"

"Yes, she's sure," Lexie said.

Rebecca glared angrily at her, but Lexie was too worried about the puppy to care. She turned to the Girl Scouts. "We have to go looking for her! All of us! Right now!"

"You heard her," said Mrs. Briar. "Let's go!"

Eleven girls hit the neighborhood streets crying, "Puppy! Here, puppy!" They looked on other people's porches and called over their fences. Lexie covered five blocks, shouting until her voice was hoarse. When she returned to her own house and found that no one had brought back the dog, she saw Rebecca wiping her cheeks and felt even worse.

"Oh, this is awful," Rebecca said. "She's so tiny. Cars won't be able to see her. And she doesn't have a name! She doesn't have tags! Even if someone finds her, they won't know where she lives!"

Hearing this, Lexie let out a little gasp. She knew what to do!

"Rebecca, tell all your friends to wait here. I've got something for everyone!"

She raced to her room where the puppy photo lay on her desk. With a big black marker she wrote beneath: *LOST PUPPY! NO TAGS! Please return to 6799 Lawler Lane.* She added the date and her home phone number and dashed to the den to make copies.

Lexie brought the pile of little posters still warm from the printer. "Here, Rebecca," she said. "I made these. Everyone can take some and put them up around town."

Rebecca looked down at the puppy's image and touched her face. "Okay. I will." When she looked up she said, "Thanks," though Lexie could tell it was hard for her.

Mrs. Briar brought out some thumbtacks and tape and the party guests went out again and put the puppy's poster everywhere it could be seen by a pedestrian or a driver. Meanwhile she called to alert the animal shelter, just in case someone turned the puppy in.

When those jobs were done, the girls were clearly tired and thirsty. Rebecca even consented to lighting the candles on her cake so that people could eat, though she was hardly in a party mood. Lexie watched her mom light the twelve candles and sang "happy birthday" as her sister closed her eyes, mumbled something to herself, and inhaled deeply before blowing with all her might.

Rebecca kept blowing even after all the candles were extinguished. Lexie had made a wish too. She was sure it was the same one Rebecca had made and hoped that maybe two wishes together would have more power than one. As the candles smoked and people clapped and cheered, Lexie was sure she heard the doorbell ring.

"Was that the—?" Rebecca asked.

"Yes!" Lexie said, and they scrambled to the front door. There on their porch was a teenage boy, his bike in the lawn. On his shoulder he cradled a tiny, shaking, red-haired puppy.

Rebecca reached out and took the frightened creature in her hands, held her to her nose, and stroked her head. "Oh, my goodness. Where did you find her?"

"Down on Thompson," the boy said. "Running

around in circles on the street. That was about two hours ago. I took her with me to my friend's house. I didn't want her to get hit."

"That's a busy street," Lexie said. "She must have run fast to get that far!"

"Yeah, she was hard to catch. Actually, I was thinking about keeping her," said the boy. "But by the time I started home, I saw the signs."

All the girls were crowding the foyer now. The boy blushed as they shouted thank you and blew him kisses. Mrs. Briar made him take some birthday cake and gave him a hug before he got away.

"You're safe, Puppy!" Lexie said, ruffling her fur. "After running around on Thompson Boulevard! What a lucky, lucky dog you are."

Rebecca had to disagree. "She's not just lucky," she said. "She had you. Puppy would never have made it to the party without your posters." She cocked her head. "Good job, Lex."

The Girl Scouts agreed and gave her a "Yay!" Even the puppy had a smile on her face as she watched from the safety of Rebecca's arms.

Rebecca cuddled with her puppy and looked at Lexie. "I'm going to name her Lucky because she's lucky to be in *our* family."

"Happy birthday, Rebecca," Lexie said. "From me to you." And it felt good to mean it from the bottom of her heart. ★

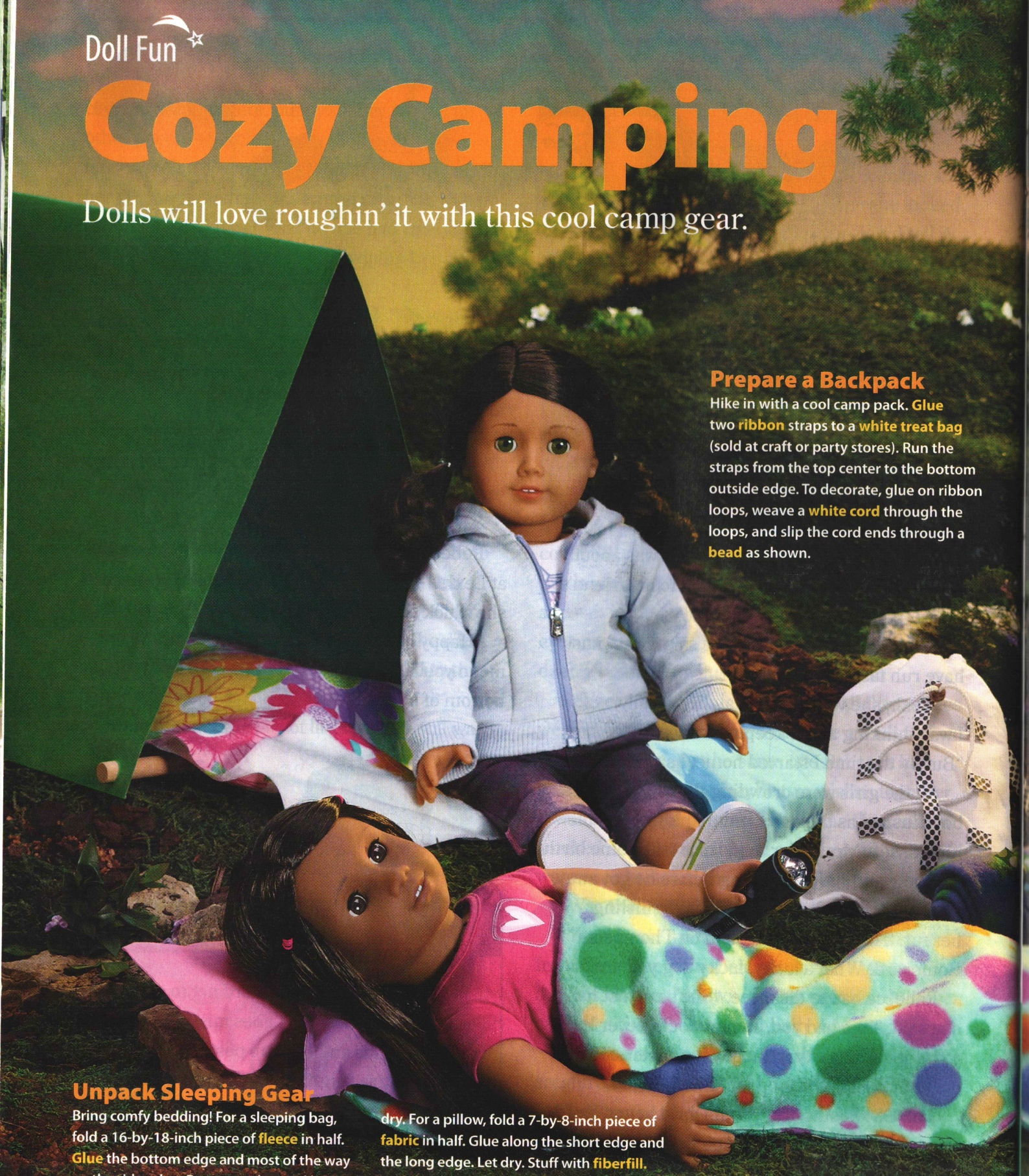
Meet the Author

Kathleen O'Dell

It's hard not to panic or overreact when a pet goes missing. Once, my kids and I put up posters throughout our entire neighborhood for our missing cat, only to find out an hour later that he was fast asleep in a dresser drawer!

Cozy Camping

Dolls will love roughin' it with this cool camp gear.



Prepare a Backpack

Hike in with a cool camp pack. **Glue** two **ribbon** straps to a **white treat bag** (sold at craft or party stores). Run the straps from the top center to the bottom outside edge. To decorate, glue on ribbon loops, weave a **white cord** through the loops, and slip the cord ends through a **bead** as shown.

Unpack Sleeping Gear

Bring comfy bedding! For a sleeping bag, fold a 16-by-18-inch piece of **fleece** in half. **Glue** the bottom edge and most of the way up the side edge. Press together and let dry. For a pillow, fold a 7-by-8-inch piece of **fabric** in half. Glue along the short edge and the long edge. Let dry. Stuff with **fiberfill.**

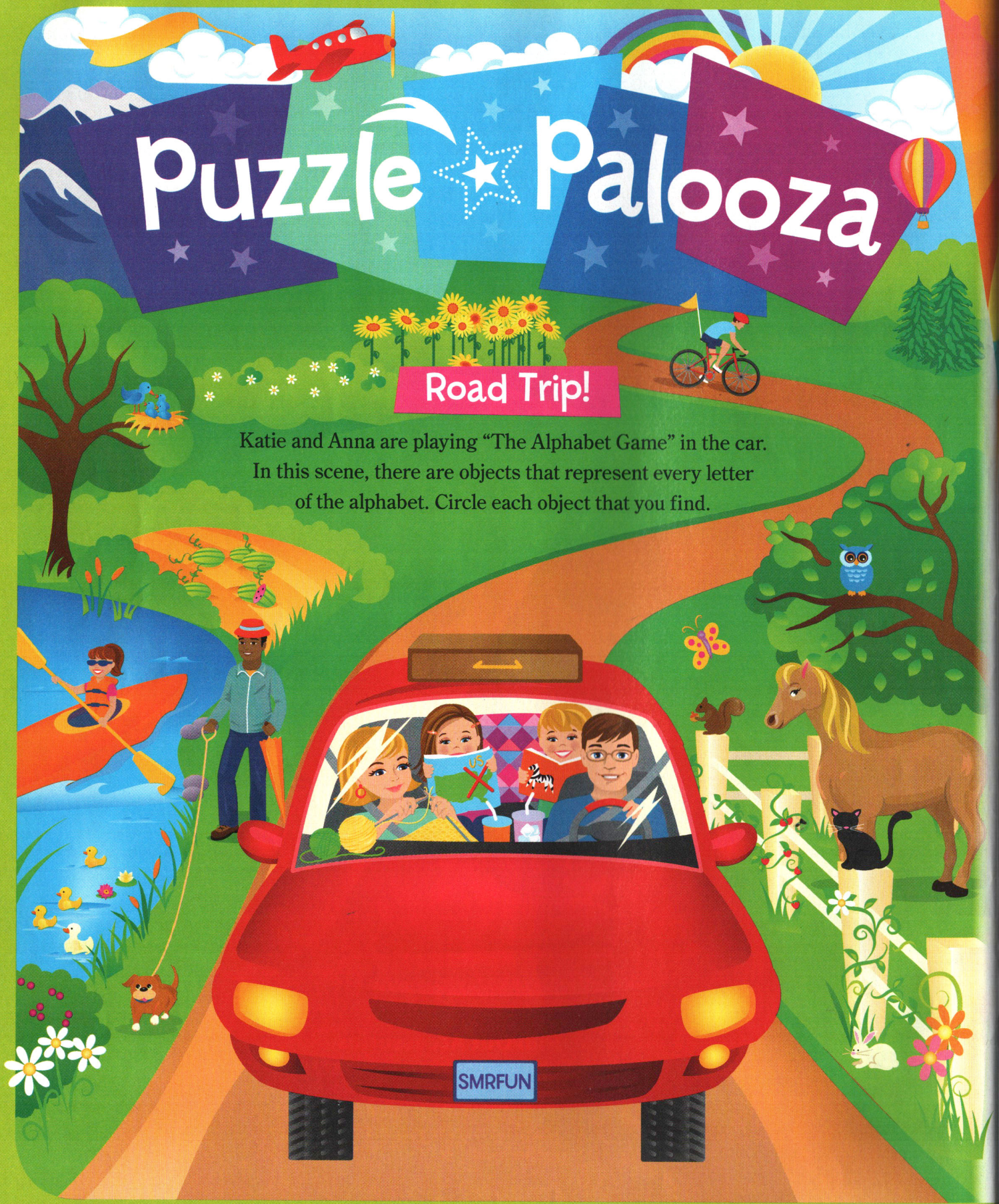
Pitch a Pup Tent

Put up a pretty tent. Before starting, ask a parent if you can cut up an old **plastic tablecloth.** Then **glue** a sheet of **poster board** onto the back of the tablecloth. Let dry. Trim around the board, and then fold it in half. Wrap two **12-inch dowel rods** with **colored duct tape.**

Punch a hole in each corner of the board that's the diameter of the rod. Slip the rods through the front and back holes as shown. For a simpler tent, fold a sheet of poster board in half!

Pull Out Accessories

Light the path with a **mini flashlight** (found at discount stores). For a firefly carrier, press **3-D glitter dot stickers** to a **mini plastic container.** Attach the items to your doll's hands with **rubber bands.** ★


Puzzle Palooza
Road Trip!
Katie and Anna are playing "The Alphabet Game" in the car. In this scene, there are objects that represent every letter of the alphabet. Circle each object that you find.
SMRFUN

Wish You Were Here...

Bailey wrote a postcard to her friend Taylor, but there are lots of words missing. Without reading the postcard out loud, ask a friend to tell you the words to fill in the blanks. When she's done, read the finished silly story!

Send your completed postcards to the address on page 7, and make us laugh!

Hi Taylor!

Hello from sunny _____ (place)! I'm at the beach, sitting in a _____ (noun) and I'm looking at the _____ (noun). _____ (plural animal) are jumping in the waves, and _____ (plural animal) are flying overhead. I've collected _____ (number) _____ (plural noun) on the beach! My family and I had a _____ (adjective) dinner last night. I ate _____ (unusual food), and it was _____ (adjective)! In _____ (number) days, I'll be getting on a _____ (noun) to come home.

See you soon!
Bailey

Photo Fun

Hannah P., age 10, went on a hiking trip and walked to the top of an extinct volcano! To find out which state she is in, read the clues and write your answer in the blank.

1. This state is in the desert, but sometimes, it snows there.
2. This state isn't "New" and it isn't "North," either.

Answer: _____

Nifty States

These girls are traveling to different states this summer. Read the girls' names to discover their vacation destinations.

1. Cali Fiona _____
2. Louise Anna _____
3. Allie Pamela _____
4. Ari Zora _____
5. Missy Pippy _____

This puzzle idea was submitted by this issue's Puzzle Pal.

Isa G.
Age 12, New York

Want to be an AG Puzzle Pal? Send puzzles, secret codes, or brainteasers **created by YOU** to the address on page 7.

Illustrations: Karen Walcott

This issue's Buzzword is...

knickknack

The word "knickknack" is hidden in this word search five times. Look forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally to find it.

K K C I K I A A K N C C K K C K N K A I N N I K K A K
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How to say it: NICK-nack

What it means: a decorative object; a trinket

One way to use it: During her vacation, Savannah visited a souvenir shop and saw lots of knickknacks.

Answer Box

Road Trip!

Here are some objects that we found, but you can find more, too!

airplane	nest
bike	owl
car	pine
dog	quilt
earrings	rabbit
flag	suitcase
glasses	tree
horse	umbrella
ice	vine
jacket	watermelon
kayak	map with "X" on it
lake	yarn
map	zebra

Nifty States

1. California
2. Louisiana
3. Alabama
4. Arizona
5. Mississippi

Photo Fun

Nevada

Buzzword

Posters Carefully cut along the dotted lines to remove your posters.

Don't worry—be hoppy!

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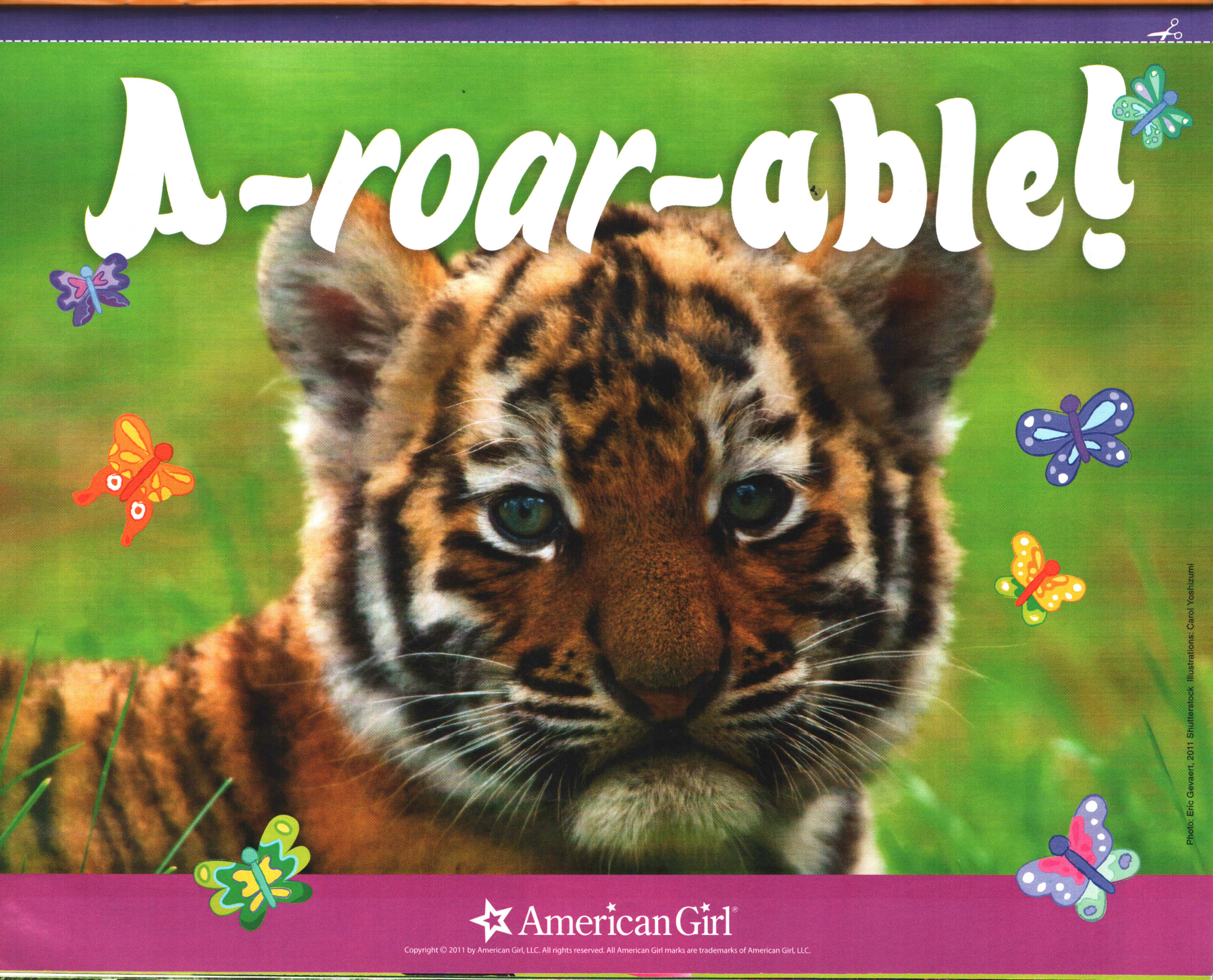

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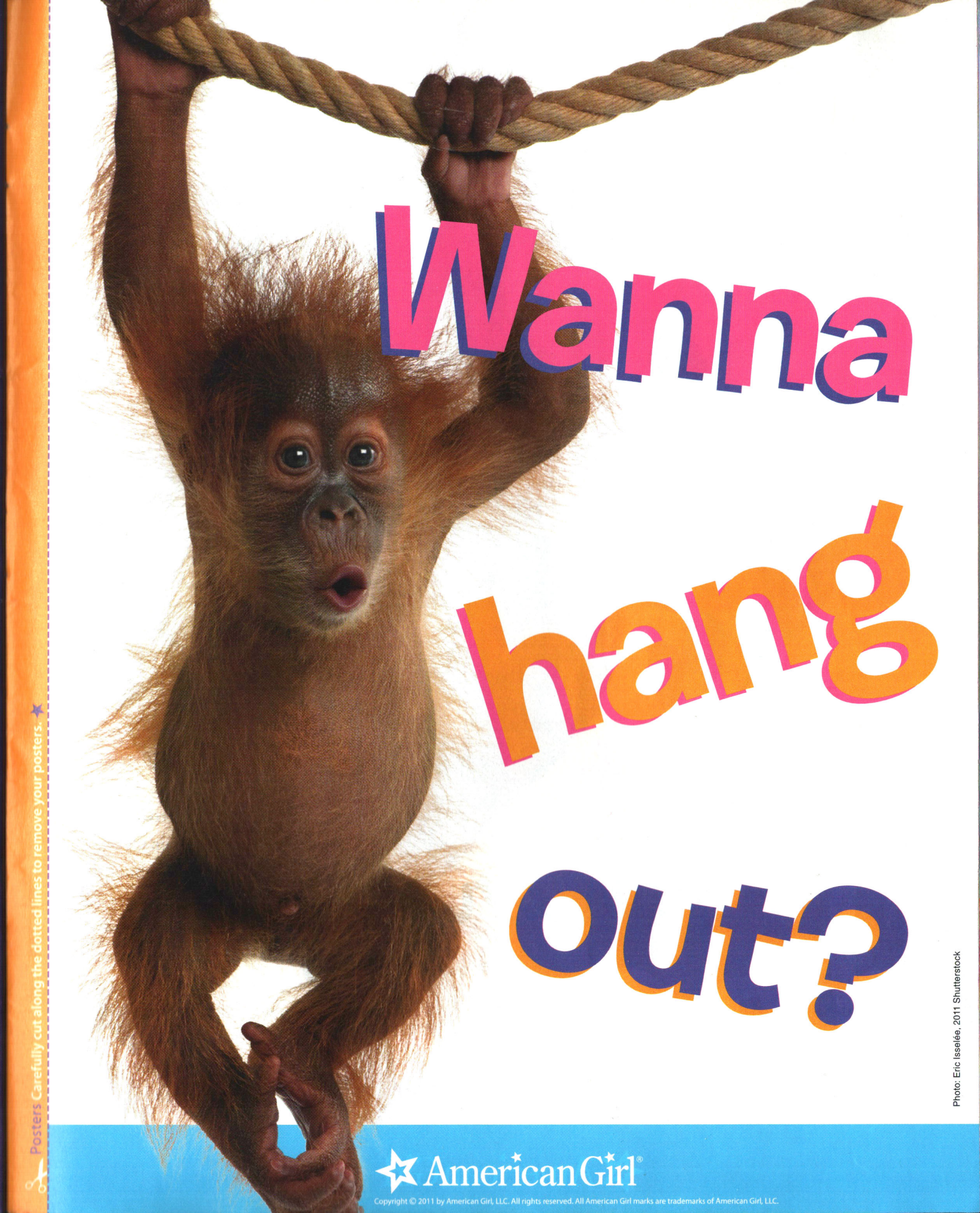

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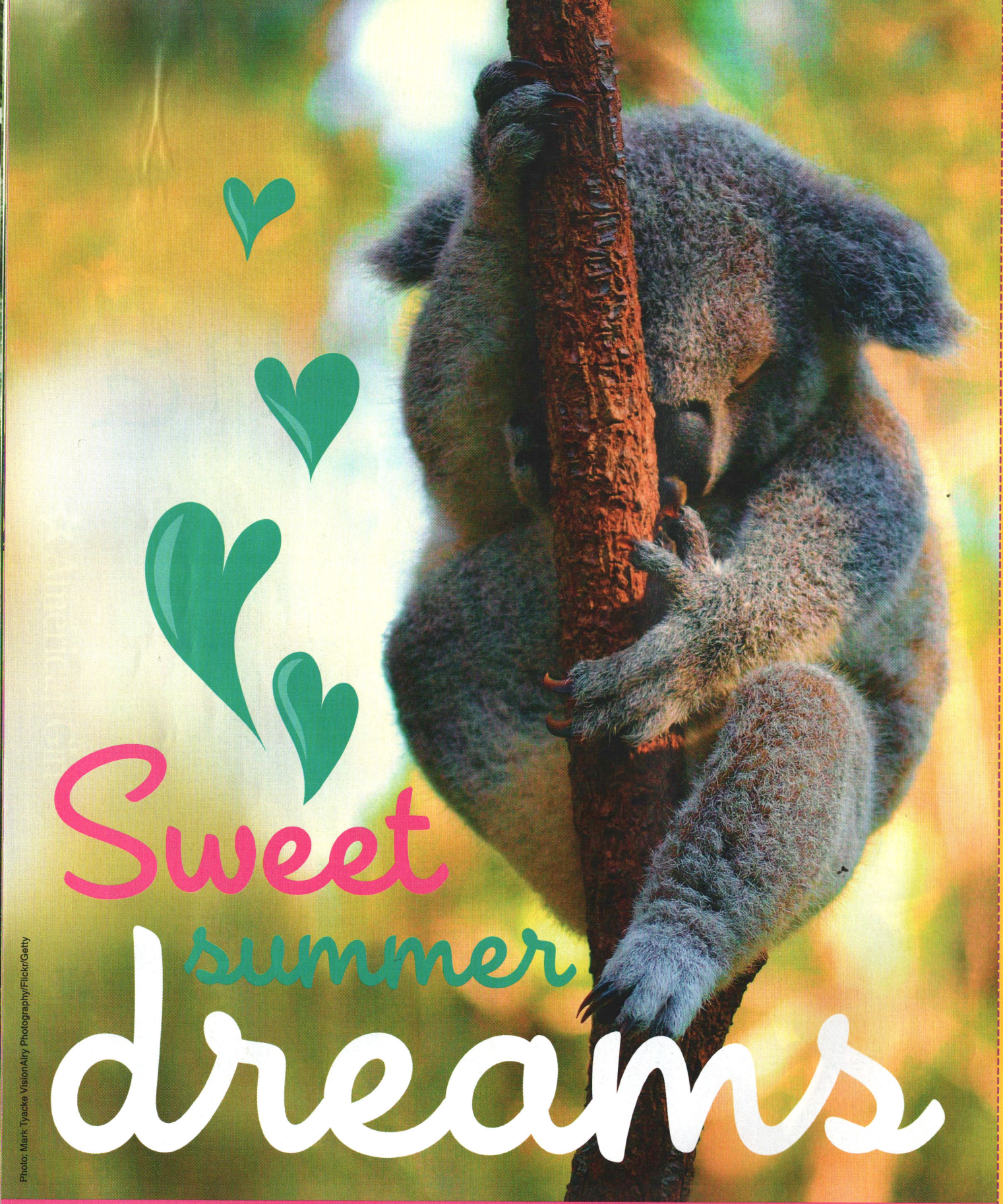

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HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

My walls are pink. My mirror and carpet and even my trash can are pink. I got a green bedspread, but I still need non-pink ideas.

PLASTERED IN PINK

Check with a parent to see what you're allowed to do to your room. Then start adding decorations. Cover your pink walls with big posters or items that represent things you care about. Carefully cover the frame of your mirror and your trash can with brightly printed duct tape, and ask if you can get a throw rug for the middle of your floor. The pink will still be there, but you'll have other colors to look at, too.

Dear *American Girl,*

I have a problem with saving money. Whenever I get money, I spend it right away! I want to quit spending and start saving.

Spender

You don't have to stop spending. Just choose an amount to save each month—if your allowance is $30 a month, maybe you'd save $10. Then ask your parents to help you open a savings account. It's easier to save when you keep your cash in the bank instead of your pocket. Your savings will add up, and soon you'll have money to spend on something special.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

Everybody calls me a cute nickname that I don't like. I've asked them to stop, but it's like they can't! What else can I do?

HELP!

You're asking people to break a habit they've had for a long time, so this will take patience. When people call you by your nickname, calmly remind them, "It's Elizabeth, remember?" Even better? Say it cheerfully. Some people—especially family members—might not get the message. For those people, ask yourself if it's worth making a fuss. If not, try to let it go.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I'm 11, but I still don't know how to ride a bike. My parents always say that they are too busy to teach me. Please help.

I am so embarrassed

Biking is a great way to be active and have fun with friends. Talk to your parents again, and let them know how important learning this skill is to you. If they still aren't able to teach you, ask if they can help you find a trustworthy neighbor to help. Stay away from all traffic as you're learning, and be sure to *always* wear a bike helmet. Good luck, and have fun!

★

Illustrations: Laura Cornell

MORE HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

I can't make decisions, even about small things such as whether to go bowling or to a movie. It takes me so long that sometimes my mom has to choose for me. How can I decide faster and for myself?

Never-can-choose

It's pretty common to freeze when you get put on the spot about anything, including decisions. The next time it happens, try this: Say, "Give me a second." Take a few deep breaths, and turn your head away from anything that distracts you. Then try to calm down your mind so that you can make your decision. Becoming a quick decision maker won't happen right away, but this should put you on the right track.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My cousin has asked me to be a junior bridesmaid in her wedding. At first I was excited, but now I'm super nervous that I'll mess up. Please help.

Jr. Bridesmess-up

If you're a junior bridesmaid, that usually means there will be other bridesmaids. They'll be doing the same job as you, so you can look to them if you forget anything. Also, you'll feel more confident if you pay close attention during the rehearsal and ask any questions you have. (Ask another bridesmaid instead of the bride herself—she'll have a lot on her mind that day.)

Try to get your excitement back! Weddings can be a ton of fun, and your cousin will be so glad you were a part of her special day.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My friend's parents split up almost a year ago. My mom said that my friend would feel better in time, but she still doesn't. How can I help her?

Missing my best friend

It's normal for your friend to feel sad about her parents' divorce. And your mom was right—it takes time to get over something so upsetting. But a year is a long time to be sad, and it sounds as if your friend needs help. Tell her that you're worried, and mention that your school counselor is there for her. If things don't improve, tell a trusted teacher. Say, "Taylor is still sad about her parents' divorce—so sad that she doesn't seem like herself anymore. I'm worried." This might feel like you're telling on her, but you're being a good friend by trying to make sure that she's OK.

★

even MORE HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

I'm moving and starting at a new school this fall. It's always been hard for me to make new friends. What can I do?

shy

You can smile and say hi. That's the number-one way to make a new friend. After "hi," you can ask a question ("What's good for lunch?"), pay a compliment ("I like your backpack!"), or just talk about whatever. Also, look into joining an after-school club or team, where you'll have a chance to meet people who share your interests. Good luck on your big move.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My dad is away on business all summer. I want to talk to him every day, but when I get on the phone, I have nothing to say!

I love my dad

Here's what's true—your dad wants to hear about what he's missed, but mostly he just wants to hear your voice and to know that you're doing fine. So try this: During the day, look for one new thing to tell him about that night. It can be anything—something cool that you learned in a summer class, or a hilarious thing that happened at the pool, or the new way you've arranged your room. Tell him a joke, or ask him about his day. Staying connected with your dad is what's important—it will make your time apart easier.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I'm going to a family reunion this summer, and all of my cousins will be there. I'm 10, but they're all older, and I don't want them to treat me like I'm a baby. I'm not sure how to act.

all mixed up

Things get really mixed up when you try to act like someone you're not. That's true in both friendships and families. Since you're great just the way you are, you should act just exactly like yourself. Talk with your cousins about funny online videos, pets, sports, or even candy—you can usually find something in common on those topics, no matter what your age. When you stay true to the girl you are, you shine brightly in your own way. Any cool older cousin would see that.

★

Advice from You

"When you're really upset or bothered by something, try to relax by writing in a journal. Putting your feelings on paper can make it easier to deal with them."

Abbey F.
Age 12, Florida

Need advice? Got advice? Write:
Help!
***American Girl* magazine**
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Julia S. from Massachusetts designed this parade float in honor of Chinese New Year. To see more readers' floats, click on "Start the fun" at americangirlmagazine.com.

Would you rather have a collection of moon rocks or gold nuggets? To answer, click on "Start the fun" at americangirlmagazine.com and take a bonus "this or that" quiz!

Meet AG illustrator Carol Yoshizumi! Every issue, Carol's art appears on the back cover and throughout the magazine. Here's Carol drawing her newest color-in poster. Turn to page 29 to see how it turned out!

Behind the Scenes

American Girl loves all things summer—from parades to sunny skies!

Autumn D. was profiled in this issue's "Get to Work!" Here's a peek at one of her paintings—it's of her American Girl doll! To see a video of Autumn at work, visit americangirlmagazine.com and click on "Start the fun."

These girls visited American Girl to test summery crafts for "Fun in the Sun": (left to right) Sitori T., Erika T., Karen W., Hannah K., Ellorie L., Adia P., Madelyn H.

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Coming up in the September/October issue of *American Girl* magazine

Tee Spree
New ways to transform your T-shirts into works of art

Stress Less
Girls share their tips for staying calm in stressful situations.

Back to Cool
Ten ways to make this your best school year yet

Write On!
Read the winners of our short-story contest.

For more fun and games, go to americangirlmagazine.com and click on "Start the fun"!

Illustrations: Carol Yoshizumi

Carefully cut along the dotted lines to remove your poster.

Carefully cut along the dotted lines to remove your poster.

Illustrations: Carol Yoshizumi

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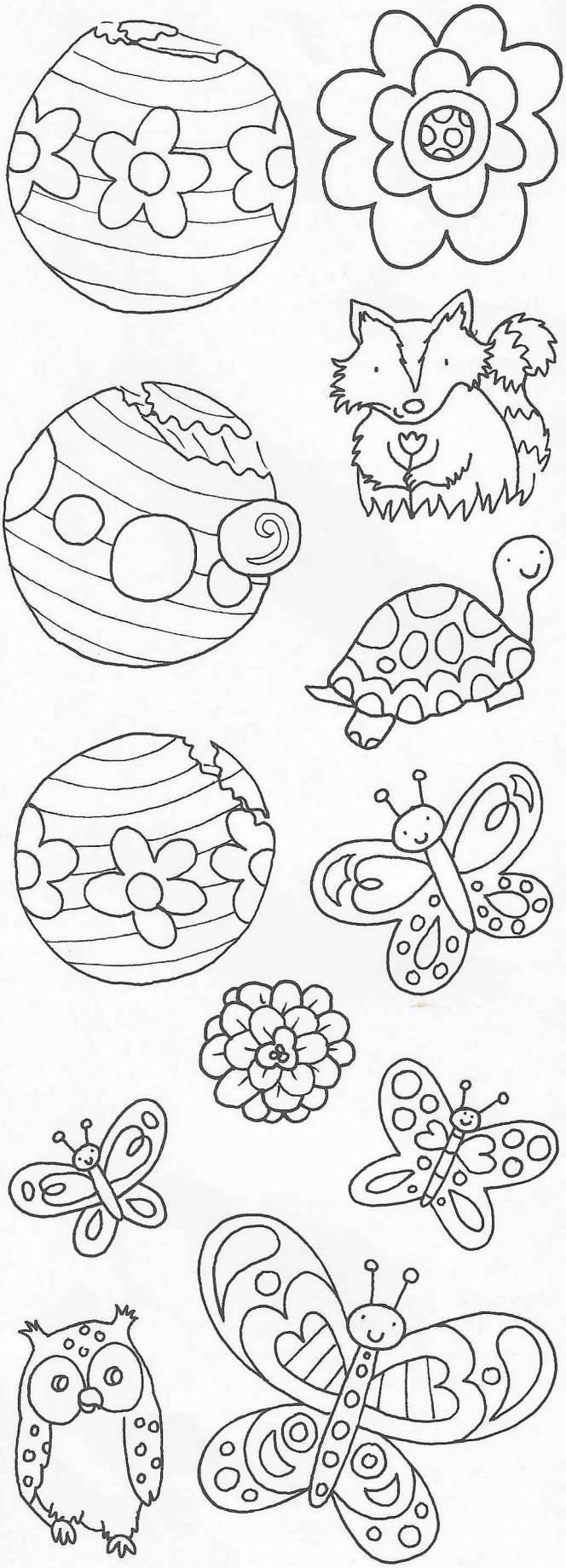
3-D Poster!

Make your color-in poster come to life by creating your own pop-up pieces. Color the pieces and cut them out. Match them to the pictures on your poster and attach using sticky foam squares.